Lectures

His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhakti Ballabha Tīrtha Goswāmī Mahārāja

Dhama Parikrama and Harinam: why do we not reap the benefits from them?

Spoken in 1987 during Kartika Vraja-mandala Parikrama (circumambulation of the holy region of Vrindavan during the month of Kartika), this lecture was originally published in Hindi in “Hari Katha Sudha”, by the Chandigarh branch of Sree Chaitanya Gaudiya Math in March 1999.

Transcriber's note: Once every three years, Sree Chaitanya Gaudiya Math organizes Vraja- mandala parikrama of 84 kosas. (1 kosa ~ 3km). It runs for the whole month of Kartika. As of this publication (October 2002), Vraja-mandala Parikrama is currently underway.

I remember the Vraja-mandala parikrama that was performed in 1987. During the last days of the parikrama in Sree Chaitanya Gaudiya Math, Gokul-Mahavan, our most revered Srila Guru Maharaja, His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Ballabh Tirtha Maharaj, raised a question to himself in order to instruct us. “As we increase our endeavor for devotion, our attachment to this world increases rather than our attachment to the Supreme Lord. Why is this so?”

While Srila Guru Maharaja was delivering a transcendental discourse from his lotus mouth, I recorded the divine and sublime words of Guru Maharaja. To purify my heart and to please the devotees who have affection for Sri Guru, I am making a small attempt to present the same transcendental words as they are.

Kuldip Chopra

Bhatinda (Punjab)

Srila Bhakti Ballabh Tirtha Maharaja: You have all performed Vraja-mandala parikrama for so many days. You have heard the glories of parikrama. By performing parikrama, our love and attachment to the Supreme Lord increases and we lose interest in any matter not related to the Supreme Lord. We got the opportunity to practice the five most important processes of bhakti: *sadhu-sanga* (association with the devotees), *nama-sankirtana* (congregational chanting of the Holy Name), *bhagavata-sravana* (hearing), *mathura-vasa* (residing in Mathura) and *sraddhaye-sri-murti-seva* (worship of the deities with faith and affection). Of all these processes, harinama-sankirtana is the best. We did perform sankirtana also, but the dirt of our inner self has not been removed. I know that my heart is full of tendency for enjoyment and to accept whatever is unfavorable to the Supreme Lord

(bhagavad-itar-pravrti). One can know the cause for something by seeing the results. All of the sadhus say that one gets liberation from this world by performing parikrama. One's tendency for sensual enjoyment vanishes and one gets love and affection for the Supreme Lord. But my love and affection for this world have increased and my material worries have increased. I have done so much sadhu-sanga, followed the sadhus, and performed sankirtana. Why have I not reaped the benefits of performing parikrama?

Once in Jalandhar, one mataji asked a similar question to our Guru Maharaj. "I have been coming to the temple for the past fifty years and performing circumambulation of the temple. I have also been hearing hari-katha from sadhus. I have been doing this for the past fifty years; yet if I look inside, I have fallen more. My affection for the world has increased. Why?"

I also have the same question. I am saying this for myself. I have full confidence that our Guruji, Param-Guruji, and Mahaprabhuji never deceive us. Vaisnavas never speak false. When a sadhu speaks falsely, he is not to be considered a sadhu. A sadhu is never a cheater; he cannot cheat anybody. Whatever he says is for our benefit.

But why are we not getting benefited? Mahaprabhu teaches us. Mahaprabhu's associates teach us. There cannot be any cheating in their instructions. We have seen the face of our Guruji externally. He does not look like a cheater. We have heard that just by going close to him, one's head would bow down by itself. Many people used to come to our Param-Guruji with the thought that they would argue with him on the scriptures and defeat him in argument. But

nobody was able to speak after coming in front of him. Such was his divine aura that heads used to bow down by themselves. His words cannot be false. So it is correct that it is beneficial to do Vraja-mandala parikrama. Worldly attachments will be destroyed and devotion increased. But why is the opposite effect happening?

In my opinion, the reason is that we are not doing it as it should be done. Surrender is necessary for devotional practice. Three things are required. The Bhagavatam says that one should hear and perform sankirtana about Cakra-pani Sri Krsna (Sri Krsna, the holder of the disk weapon); hear the divine pastimes of the Lord's birth and other activities; and perform kirtana of the Lord's Name, which reveals the pastimes of the Lord, while remaining free from attachments and bad association. When we will do so, we will get transcendental power. Bhakti, detachment, and knowledge of the Supreme Lord will all come together. This can be explained by one example. Suppose I can eat one kilogram of food. If I eat j kg, j of my hunger will be satisfied and I will get energy in similar proportion. If I eat halfway, it will be half satisfied; if I eat s kg, it will be s satisfied. When we eat fully, all our hunger will be over and we will get full satisfaction. As we eat, our appetite fills in the same proportion and we get satisfaction.

A saranagata bhakta will get God's realization along with bhakti. Detachment or reduction in attachment to this world will also come. He will lose interest in whatever is not favorable to Krsna; he will get vairagya, complete detachment. All three will come. We performed Vraja-mandala parikrama, engaged in sravana and kirtana, did everything, but still we have not got attachment to Bhagavan. Then we should understand that we are lacking in surrender to the Supreme Lord. Whatever bhakti a surrendered soul does, he gets equal detachment from the things that are unfavorable to the Supreme Lord. If our attachments in this material world are increasing, we should understand that there is some fault in our surrender. First of all I am not performing bhajan and whatever little I am doing is not according to the prescribed rules. Therefore I am not getting the desired result. The scriptures are not giving false information; Vedavyasji is not deceiving us. There is a mistake in our following; the fault is in our practice.

There are six symptoms of saranagati (the process of surrender):

Anukulyasya sankalpah: Accepting whatever is favorable to Bhagavan. But we do not accept favorable things all the time. Definitely, this is our fault. Pratikulyasya varjanam: Rejecting whatever is unfavorable. We do not reject whatever is unfavorable to Bhagavan. When surrender will be pure, then bhakti will come, God realization will come, and detachment to unfavorable things will come. Scriptural statements cannot be false.

Firm Faith: Whatever external or internal problems (e.g., lust, anger, greed, attachment, etc) we might have, only the Lord can give us emancipation from them all. This faith is lacking in us. That is our mistake or fault.

Seeing the Lord as our sole Protector: I have not accepted the Supreme Lord as the maintainer in the complete sense. My bodily needs, mental needs, and spiritual needs are being satisfied by the Supreme Lord only and no one else. I have not accepted the Supreme Lord as the only maintainer.

Humbleness: We are proud of our birth, wealth, and education. Therefore, we are lacking humbleness.

Atmanivedana: Self-surrender. We should think, "I do not belong to this world. I belong to the Supreme Lord." But we are lacking in this consciousness. I am committing mistakes in saranagati. This is one of my faults.

We do not have any interest in serving the deities of the Lord and commit offenses to them. We externally claim to have taken shelter at the feet of sad-guru and suddha bhakta but do not have faith in the deities manifested by the suddha bhakta ─ the object of worship of the suddha bhakta. Therefore, we do not have faith in honoring prasad and possess "rice and dal mentality" in honoring prasad. By honoring prasad, attachment to the material world is destroyed. However, even after so much prasad seva, why have the worldly attachments not been destroyed? Are the scriptures false?

mahaprasade
govinde nama-
brahmani vaisnave

svalpa-punyavatam
rajan visvaso naiva
jayate

“One who possesses a limited amount of pious deeds does not see the Lord’s remnants as maha-prasad and does not see the deities of Govinda as the Supreme Lord Himself.” The mentality that "this is a metal deity" or "this is a stone deity" remains. If the president of India were to come here, what would happen? Everyone would start welcoming him and honoring him out of fear. But the grandfather of the grandfather of the grandfather of the president, the Master of the uncountable universes is present here; do we have this realization about Him? This is also a fault. It is said by Vedavyasa Muni that seeing the deities as stone or idols is an offense. Our heart becomes dirty by this. Whatever is being offered to the deities should not be considered as simply dal, rice, and vegetables. It is said that by honoring prasad, one can get full control over his senses.

(bhai-re) sarira abidya-jal, jodendriya tahe kal,

jive phele visaya-sagore
ta'ra madhye jihwa ati, lobamoy
sudurmati, ta'ke jeta kathina
samsare

krsna baro doyamoy, koribare
jihwa jay, swa-prasad-anna dilo
bhai
sei anna-mrta pao, radha-krsna-
guna gao, preme dako caitanya-
nitai

Bhaktivinode Thakura has given the essence of the scriptures. Has he written something false? Do we have a proper understanding of prasad as the

remnants of the Supreme Lord? We do not see the deities as non-different from the Supreme Lord Himself, so what can we understand about prasad? We will leave the prasad. I have heard about our gurudeva that before coming to the Math, he used to eat only once a day and, even at that, only boiled vegetables. He performed many austerities in the Himalayas and remained without food for three days. But after taking shelter of Prabhupada (Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Prabhupada), he started taking prasad. While we were living with Guru Maharaj, we did not see him taking anything other than prasad.

Occasionally, when he was ill, if we tried to give him something after consulting with the doctor, he would say, “No! Taking only prasad is good; otherwise, my disciples will also imitate me.” We used to say “We shall cook something separately for you and give it to you in the morning. Otherwise you may fall ill.” However, Guruji always refused; otherwise everybody else would start doing the same. By practicing it himself, one teaches others. Guruji took all the trouble to follow it himself. He used to say, “No problem! It may be 2 o’clock or 3 o’clock. I will take the prasad whenever it comes from the temple.” Why did he do this? His Guruji established the deities. They are the Supreme Lord Himself. By honoring their remnants, all troubles will be over. That was his philosophy.

Whatever a vaisnava gives is also prasad. I am seeing that I lack all these qualities; therefore, all the unwanted things are coming. I do not have proper intelligence to see the deities as non-different from the Supreme Lord Himself. There must be some reason for this. The worst is this tongue. It is most difficult to control the tongue. Of all the senses, the tongue is the most uncontrollable. Whoever can control the tongue can control everything. Whoever cannot control the tongue cannot control the senses. What is the meaning of getting control over the tongue? Does it mean to remain without eating? If that were so, our Guru Maharaj would have performed many austerities. Why did he start honoring prasad after leaving tapasya (austerities)? If we honor prasad with proper respect, our non-eternal propensities will go away. It is very difficult to control the tongue. By not eating, eating only once a day, eating vegetables, or living on air, one will not be able to remove the hankerings of the tongue.

Not eating one day causes over-eating the next day in similar proportion. We eat more on dvadasi day after not eating on ekadasi day. The tendency to eat

does not go away. Our previous acarya Thakur Bhaktivinode has given us the remedy that by honoring prasad one can get control over the tongue. If you want to control the tongue, honor prasad: the remnants of food which has been offered to the Lord. Our tendency to revolt against the Supreme Lord will vanish by honoring prasad.

Why am I not accepting the things that are favorable to devotional service? Why do I not give proper respect to bhagavat-prasad?

We have to analyze this. Guruji and Bhaktivinode Thakur are not speaking falsely. What am I lacking inside? We have to look at this. Honor the Lord's prasad. Take the remnants of the Lord. Such a simple path to follow. All your propensities to revolt against the Supreme Lord will vanish.

Therefore, seeing the Lord's deities as stone and seeing Sri Guru as an ordinary human being are the two biggest mistakes. So, we find faults in Guruji. One will go to hell by considering Guru to be an ordinary human being. I must have this fault. I must have committed some offense against Guruji. Otherwise, why am I not getting benefit even after doing so much service? The reasons are considering Guruji to be human and considering the caste of a vaisnava. What family does the vaisnava belong to? Is he a brahmana, ksatriya, vaisya, sudra, or candal? Whatever family a vaisnava takes birth in, he is pure. Haridasa Thakur took birth in a Muslim family. Our heart becomes polluted by seeing the vaisnava on the basis of caste; we have to go to hell. A vaisnava is dear to the Supreme Lord. He can take birth in any family. The pure devotee is always nirguna irrespective of the family of his birth. I am telling you about the pure devotee, not the pretender devotee. We might posses this fault in us which is preventing the cleansing of our heart.

Similarly, we must not see the water of Visnupadi Ganga and Yamuna as ordinary water. The water that has been used to wash the feet of a vaisnava is not ordinary! Ordinary water just cleans the dirt of the body, but the water that has washed the feet of a vaisnava destroys the ill effect of Kali Yuga. The water that has washed the Lotus feet of Lord Visnu destroys the ill effect of Kali Yuga. Yamuna water is not ordinary water. It destroys the ill effect of Kali Yuga and gives bhakti. By considering the water of Ganga or Yamuna to be ordinary water, one goes to hell. The foot-wash water and the dust of the feet of devotees are the strength of devotional practice. They give the benediction of devotion to Sri Krsna. Our Gurudev, by his causeless mercy on us established the deities of the Supreme Lord here. The prasad of the Lord, after

being honored by a vaisnava, becomes maha-maha-prasad.

One should not leave such prasad. Otherwise we will consider the deities as stone and prasad as rice, dal, etc. This is not good. Our gurudeva performed his devotional practice with great care because we are the followers of exemplary acts. Whoever we see as the best, we follow.

The Lord and His Name can destroy all kinds of ill effects of Kali Yuga. The Holy Name can give love of Godhead. One should not consider such Names to be ordinary words. What will happen by doing so? By considering the ordinary names of this world to be equal to the Name of the Supreme Lord and considering the Lord's Name to be ordinary, one goes to hell. Why is our heart not getting cleansed of dirt? What is the reason? There must be some fault; we have to remove it.

Considering the demigods to be equal to or independent of the Supreme Lord Sri Krsna causes one to attain hell. The Supreme Lord is complete; therefore He is one. The Supreme Lord cannot be three, four, or thousands. He may have infinite pastimes. All demigods are under Him. Brahma, Rudra and others are all His devotees and subordinates. One who considers Brahma, Rudra and other demigods to be equal to Narayana is a pretender. This is the opinion of the scriptures. We have got such false ideas and that is the reason we are not able to get any benefit even after doing so much.

This is not surrender. Offenses are being committed at the feet of guru, vaisnava and the Holy Name. It is the most horrible offense to criticize the Name, guru and vaisnava. One will not achieve the Supreme Lord by chanting the Holy Name if he is criticizing sadhus and guru. He will go to hell. Even while chanting the Holy Name, one will go to hell. A small amount of nama-aparadha (offense to the Holy Name) gives the boon of dharma, artha and kama. If we are not careful about this, our heart will remain polluted by all of these offenses.

Here I have done my self-examination. So many days have been spent doing parikrama, following vaisnavas, and chanting the Lord's name loudly. You might be thinking that I am doing a lot of kirtana and dancing. But what is the result? The heart is still as polluted as before. Saranagati must be missing. There is some fault in our surrender. Nama-aparadha is going on. Dhama-aparadha (offense to the holy place) is going on. That is why we are not getting the desired results. Therefore, in this holy dhama, to bestow mercy on

us, our guruji, who is the dear most of the Supreme Lord, gave us shelter and installed his object of worship at different places for our eternal benefit. Guruji is always present here. Just as the Lord is always present everywhere, His manifestation of guruji is also eternally present.
Therefore, we pray at the lotus feet of guruji. I am in such a miserable condition.

How can I avoid committing offenses? Pure surrender can only be achieved by the mercy of the vaisnava. If we don’t have faith in the vaisnava, all our deeds are useless. How to get spiritual benefit so that we get faith in the vaisnava? I want to stay under the guidance of the vaisnava for the remaining days of my life. I want to remove all of my anarthas by devotional practice. This is my prayer at the lotus feet of guruji. Our siksa guru Parampujyapada Puri Goswami Maharaj is present here. He feels compassion for us; that is why he comes here after taking so much trouble. How much affection he has! He thinks that our guruji is not present. "If I don’t go to the parikrama then they will be discouraged." So he comes and gives his blessings. Although he has affection for me, I pray to him to give me mercy and to remove all the bad desires from my heart. You are free from any desire; that is why you have come here. You have come to the dhama because you have got the mercy of guru and Bhagavan. You all please bless me; then I will get spiritual benefit.

vancha-
kalpatarubhyas ca
krpa-sindhubhya eva
ca patitanam
pavanebhyo
vaisnavebhyo namo
namah

Sri Krishna-Kirtanaya Namah

Tom's
Place
Waikiki
Beach
Honolulu, Ohau, Hawaii.
USA 16 February 1998,
7:00 PM

One great saint of West Bengal spoke about the teachings of
Lord Sree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu in a nutshell in one verse :--

aradhyo bhagavan vrajesa-tanayas tad dhama
vrndavanam ramya kacid upasana vraja-vadhu-
*vargena ya kalpita *
srimad bhagavatam pramanam amalam prema
pumartho mahan sri-caitanya-mahaprabhor matam
*idam tatradaro nah parah *

Srinath Cakravartti

[Srinatha Cakravartti, Ara Uddhava das \ (Caitanya Caritamrta, Adi-lilA, 12.84). He is mentioned in the narration of branch from Srila Gadadhar Pandit Gosvami]

In one verse, Visvanath Chakravarthy has expressed the essence of the teachings of Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. What is the teaching of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu? What will be the highest object of worship?

According to Lord Sree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu you are to worship vrajeshwara. Who is vrajeshwara? Nanda Maharaj, the son of Nanda Maharaj. Vrajendra means Nanda Maharaj. King of Nanda-bhavan, Gokul Mahavan. Sree Krishna, son of Nanda Maharaj is the Highest Object of worship.

What is the Realm?

His Transcendental Abode is at Vrindavan.

What worship is the best? Who are the best worshipers of the Vrajendranandan Krishna?

The mode of worship of Gopis is the best-madhura-rasa. The consorthood of worship-gopis is the highest.

Is there any evidence?

You will find the evidence in Srimad Bhagavatam, the quintessence of all scriptures. It substantiates this view.

What is it we have to get? What is the highest attainment?

Dharma, artha, kama, moksha??? No. Dharma - piety; artha - wealth; kama - fulfillment of desires; moksha - salvation - these are not the highest pursuits. The highest objective, the highest end of life is Krishna-Prema-'Divine Love'.

The Essence of the Teachings of Lord Chaitanya

This is the essence of the teachings of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. This is the essence of the teachings of our param-gurupad-padma Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur. When we actually perform Guru-puja, when we accept it and worship Sri Krishna as per the directions of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and His Associates, that is called "actual Guru-Puja". Without doing that, only saying, "Oh I am doing something, something is better than nothing-floral tributes"-without accepting His teachings, without real performance, you cannot achieve the actual objective.

Why has Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu taught us to worship Nanda-nandan Krishna? He has not taught us to worship Devas-Brahma, Rudra and other Demigods? He has not advised us in this way. Nowhere will you find such advice. He has not taught us to worship brahman, paramatma; neither the rormless God-brahman nor paramatma, the Oversoul - the intelligent, indwelling monitor in the heart of the living entity. He has not advised us to worship here. He has also not taught us to worship the many incarnations of Godhead - Ram, Narasingha, etc. Even He has not taught us to worship Mathuradish Krishna.

In Krishna, there are different forms - Mathuradish, Dwarkadish, even our Kurukshetra. It is specifically mentioned, "You have to worship Nanda-nandan Krishna. You can get all kinds of ananda - bliss by worshipping Nanda-nandan Krishna."

Veda-Vyasa Muni also says in Srimad Bhagavatam:

ete camsa-kalah pumsah krsnas tu bhagavan
svayam \ indrari-vyakulam lokam mrdayanti
*yuge yuge * (Srimad Bhagavatam, 1.3.28)

Ram, Narasingha, etc., are partial manifestations of the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna. Some others, they are also partial manifestations of partial manifestations. Kala means part of the part. But Krishna is svayam bhagavan. He is the original Supreme Lord. If you do not understand this, then how can we have one-pointed devotion? By serving Krishna, you serve God. Even Baladev - all the Purusha-Avatars are coming from Baladev; Mahavishnu, Karanavishnu, Kshirodakashayivishnu, Shesha - all are manifestations of Baladev. And Baladev is Godhead Himself:

nayam atma bala-hinena labhyo
na ca pramadat tapaso vapy
alingat \ etair upayair yatate
yas tu vidvams tasyaisa atma
*visate brahma-dhama *
(Mundakopanisat, 3.2.4)

You cannot get Krishna without the grace of Baladev - bala does not mean this physical thing. Nayana-mantra bala-hina lobha - without the grace of Baladev, nobody can get Krishna.

The Service of Krishna can only be attained through Baladev

Our Gurumaharaj used to explain that nobody can get the service of Sri Krishna without Baladev. Krishna Himself - the first manifestation of Krishna is Baladev. Baladev is also Vishnu - Bhagavan. He has manifested this form to teach us how to serve Krishna-Godhead Himself has taken the position of Guru. He is not the manifestation of potency. He is the "Possessor" of that

potency. The first manifestation of Sri Krishna is Baladev.

From Baladev, then Sankarshan in Vaikuntha is manifested from Baladev. Then from Sankarshan comes Karanavishnu, Mahavishnu, Kshirodkashayivishnu and paramatma. The yogis worship paramatma. Paramatma is the manifestation of the manifestation of the manifestation of Baladev. Baladev is serving Krishna. What to speak of the Devas, Godhead Himself is serving Krishna. We should not have any doubt of it.

In two ways we can understand a thing -

There are persons who say, "Krishna was a human being" because he was born as we find human beings get their birth here through parents. They say, "Vasudeva Krishnanandan has got parents so He is a human being" - He may be superhuman; He may be a great politician, a great diplomat?

But Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu is not teaching us to worship great politicians, great diplomats or super-humans. Even in the Gita you will not find this. Nowhere in Gita will you find any evidence to prove that Krishna is a super-human, or a great politician or diplomat. Show me one verse from Gita where it says so - you will not find it. No. You will find just the opposite. In Gita, Krishna Himself says:

mattah parataram nanyat kincid asti
dhanan'jaya \ mayi sarvvam idam protam
*sutre manigana iva * (Gita 7.7)

"There is nothing superior to Me." M - Capital. All things are interlinked as the gems are interlinked through the thread. It is said nowhere in the Gita - show me the verse where it says - that Krishna is super-human, Krishna is a politician, Krishna is a diplomat. Where? Why do we speak such things?

Philosophy and "Darshan Shastra"

I want to say something on the philosophical side regarding spirit, matter and perception. There are two aspects of a thing-morphological (external aspect), ontological (internal true aspect). The 'critical philosophy' of the great German Philosopher Emanuel Kant can be discussed here for clear understanding. The contention of Kant is that a human being can know only the 'Thing as it

appears' but not the 'thing in itself' or 'the thing as it is'. Human being can know the things as they appear 'through sensibility' and 'understanding'. By sensibility. the perceived thing is put into 'form' and by understanding into 'category'. Of course, there exists one special capacity in the understanding of human being which is apriori-innate in the capacity of understanding, that human being can know universal and necessary truth of a thing as it appears. But there is no capacity in him to know the 'thing-in- itself'.

But German philosopher Hegel, refuting the contention of Kant, says that the 'thing in itself' can be known through speculative reasoning. F. H. Bradley, British philosopher, on the other hand, says when there is reasoning, whether speculative or non-speculative, the bar between the debater and the debated prevents us from knowing the 'thing-in-itself'. The 'thing-in- itself' can be known only through immediate presentation and feeling. The Western philosophers, through the inductive process, ultimately are indirectly supporting the view of Indian theistic philosophers - that 'thing-in-itself' can only be realized, but cannot be comprehended by subtle or gross senses.

'Philosophy' and 'Darshan-sastra' are not synonymous. The etymological meaning of Philosophy is 'Philo'-'Sophia'-or love of knowledge. The Indian philosophers of the theistic school have refuted this contention: "Reality cannot be known through empiricism- knowledge comprehended by subtle and gross senses." According to Indian theistic philosophers-"If Reality is Reality, that Reality is always existing". Human being is finite, his intellect is finite, mental capacity is finite, anything determined by intellect and mental capacity of human being is also finite. Human being cannot determine the ultimate reality by his finite intellect-that determination will be an intellectually concocted thing, that is not Reality. Reality cannot be manufactured in the factory of the finite intellect of the Human Being. Reality is always existing. We are not to produce it; we are to find the way, the method of how to see that truth, which is indicated by the word 'Darshan-Shastra'.

Self-luminous-see everything in proper perspective

If we want to see the sun in the night, we cannot see. We have got the

experience, if we have to see things, we require the help of light. The Sun is a thing. If we collect all the lights of Honolulu, can we see the sun in the night? Is that the way of seeing the sun? Sun is not such a thing to be seen with the help of other lights. Sun is self-effulgent: - self-lumi-nous. There is enough light in it. When sun will rise, through the rays of the sun, we can see the sun. We can see ourselves, we can see all things in their proper perspective. When sun will rise, darkness will go, all problems created by darkness will be solved immediately. We do not want to take this process. When Supreme Lord Sri Krishna, Who is The Cause of all causes, Who is All-Existence, All-Knowledge, All-Bliss and as such, is self-effulgent will descend to the surrendered soul, nescience will be removed and all problems will be solved automatically.

nayam atma pravacanena
labhyo na medhaya na
bahuna srutena \ yam
evaisa vrnute tena labhyas
*tesyaisa atma vivrnute tanum svam *

(Mundakopanisat 3.2.3; Kathopanisat 1.2.23)

"The Supreme Lord cannot be known by erudition, intellect or scriptural knowledge, He reveals His Eternal Transcendental Form to a completely surrendered soul."

Knowledge of reality through revelation

Pujypad Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaj has given his view in one speech. He said:- "Those who don't believe in God - they are either fool number one or mad." Who has given them the right to say that there is no God? From where they have got the power to say that there is no God? When the power will be withdrawn, can they say anything? Krishna is self- effulgent, Cause of all Causes, through revelation we can know Him. Even Brahma, the Creator, attaining huge span of life-which cannot be mathematically calculated-could not recognize Sri Krishna.

The span of life of Kali-yuga (Black Age) is four lakhs and 32,000 years (one hundred thousand = one lakh). Only 5500 years have now elapsed-you are seeing the effects of Kali- yuga-so many crimes and sins. Span of life of Dvapara-yuga is eight lakhs and 64,000 years- double; Treta-yuga is 12 lakhs and 96,000 years-triple, and Satya-yuga-four times of the

life of Kali-yuga or 17 lakhs and 28,000 years. The total life of the four Ages [one Mahayuga] is 43 lakhs 20 thousand. If it is multiplied by 71 times-it will be the life of one Manu. Brahma's one day comprises the lives of fourteen Manus, Brahma's night is of the same span-Brahma's day and night comprises the lives of 28 Manus. So 365 of these days comprise Brahma's one year. Brahma's total life is 100 years. Inconceivable.

That which Lord Brahma could not understand

When Brahma could not understand Sri Krishna, how can we understand Him? When the Brajavasis, the residents of Vraja, Krishna's devotees-Gopis and Gop-Gopis-declared: "Krishna is the highest objective - God of all Gods."

Brahma could not accept that: "It cannot be. Krishna is son of milkman, Nanda Maharaj. He is a human being. He was born a cowherd boy. He is moving in the forest with the cowherd boys. He has got no affluence, no opulences, He is not Bhagavan."

Bhaga means opulence. Van means One who possesses. Bhagavan means One who possesses opulences. Six-fold principal opulences have been mentioned in 'Vishnupurana':

aisvaryyasya samagrasya viryyasya yasasah
sriyah \ jnana-vairagyayos caiva sannam
bhaga itingana \\ (Visnu-purana 6.5.47)

One who possesses totality of wealth, totality of fame, totality of power; totality of jnana- knowledge, totality of renunciation and totality of beauty.

Bhagavan possesses this.

"You will not find anything in Krishna. He is a cowherd boy. Krishna is poor, His associates are also poor. They are tending the calves, moving in the forests - no wealth. Krishna wears garlands of flowers, He has no gems, no diamonds-nothing1 He is a poor person and leaves of the trees of Vrindavan are on his head, and also a Peacock's tail - feather - he has put it on His head and He has become Bhagavan! How? I don't believe it." Lord Brahma cannot understand; how can we understand?

Krishna is our most beloved friend

When Krishna killed Aghasura-great demon, gigantic giant, then Brahma thought, "How he killed that demon?" Then he came to examine, to test Krishna - whether He is Bhagavan or not.

Krishna is fond of making feasts - picnic you may say - with the cowherd boys by the side of the lake - sarovar - it is sanctified word. By the side of the lake all the Cowherd boys and Krishna - they gather there - come together in the evening and the cowherd boys have brought food to feed Sri Krishna-not for themselves, They have got extreme love for Sri Krishna, "Sri Krishna is our bosom friend; we have to give Him delicious food." First they taste, when it is not sour or bitter, then, "Kanaya, take this."

After taking, you cannot offer to Bhagavan. But the Vrajavasis have got no such cajestic feeling of their object of worship. With love they serve Sri Krishna as their own bosom friend - no restriction.

Rice and yogurt in His left-hand palm

Brahma came, "What is He doing? Taking the remnants of all the cowherd boys?" Brahma is seeing Krishna-how? Krishna, in His left-hand palm is keeping rice and yogurt mixture - what do you say, coagulated milk? dayee, yogurt? And rice in the left-hand palm. This is against the instructions of the Vedas - we should not take food in the left-hand palm. Here, nobody understands this. And Brahma said, "He does not know the Vedic instructions.

How is it He can be Bhagavan-rejected.

And He is keeping the flute inside the waist, tucked in, and the stick and horn at the left- hand armpit and all the cowherd boys addressing Him in a very familiar way, in using the word "tu" -not a respectable term. Addressing Krishna. "This is the address of Bhagavan? They should bow down, make prostrate obeisances - a respectable way to address Bhagavan. He cannot be Bhagavan-reject.

Now Krishna says, "You take food, I am bringing the calves. When Krishna went to bring the calves, then Brahma thought, "You has become Bhagavan? I shall examine You."

Brahma lifted all the calves-he lifted them and took them to the caves of Sumeru Mountain and kept them there. And Krishna was searching everyhere, "Where are my calves?" Very much worried, He is asking different rich men and other people there, "How can I go and return to my house?"

'We have not seen,' - he was asking many persons.

Krishna is puzzled by the disappearance of the calves

And Brahma thought, "Oh, He is not bhagavan. Bhagavan is omniscient. He knows everything. I have lifted the calves; He did not know. He is not bhagavan-I reject. If bhagavan is omnipotent, all powerful-if He would have been bhagavan, He could have forcibly brought back those calves. He is not omnipotent. I reject."

Kanaya is asking many persons questions. When he returned, Brahma had lifted all the cowherd boys, took away all the cowherd boys, kept them in the cave of the mountain. When Brahma returned, Krishna was weeping, "I have lost my calves; I have lost my cowherd boys. How can I go, return?" He is asking many persons, going to a distant place and searching and weeping, but nothing.

And Lord Brahma, "Oh, and You have become Bhagavan? This is the science of Bhagavan. You do not know where your cowherd boys have gone. You are not omniscient and You are not omnipotent." Brahma smiled and went away.

Krishna Himself took the form of the cowherd boys

When Brahma left that place, Krishna also smiled and became so much number of cowherd boys and so much number of calves. When he returned, nobody could understand that they have lost their calves and lost their cowherd boys because he is All-Powerful, He can do anything.

Our Param Pujyapad Swami Maharaj has told one story. I heard some portion of one of his speeches. He said, "We cannot get Bhagavan because we have got no belief in Bhagavan. Those who have got no belief in Bhagavan, they cannot get Bhagavan."

He has given one instance: Narada Goswami is dearest devotee of Krishna. He was going to Vaikuntha from the Earth planet. On the way, he met one brahman who asked, "Where are you going?"

'How it is possible? Bhagavan is Supreme Lord. He is infinite. He possesses Infinite Potency. He can do everything. Nothing is impossible. It is nothing to Him. If we have got no belief, how can we get Him. "Krishna took the form when Lord Brahma left, Krishna Himself took the form of all the calves and cowherd boys-same complexion, same tone, everything the same. Nobody could understand that they have lost their sons. They could not understand.

But there was one change: previously they have got no attachment to their household life- gradations of the house. They have got attachment to Krishna. But on this day, they have got attachment to the sons because Krishna came in the form of their sons. By touching their sons, they have got ecstatic feelings. What is this? Because the Gop-gopis, they have got the desire to get Krishna as their son. Krishna is bhakta-vatsala. We should understand.
Fulfilling the desires of all the devotees.

Brahma has no power to take away His entourage-no power. By His grace, His desire, Brahma lifted the cowherd boys and calves to fulfill the desires of the gopis. Gop's-they want to love Krishna as son-for that reason Krishna came [as their sons]. And also the cows they are not ordinary cows; they are rishis munis-they have become cows. They have got the desire, "If Krishna comes as calves and sucking our breasts to fulfill our desire. By our milk, Sri Krishna is served. But Krishna Himself, if he comes in the form of the calves, is sucking our breasts." So Krishna took the form of calves to fulfill their desire. The Lord may come for the cows, for one year He fulfilled their desires.

The same calves, same cowherd boys

After one year, which is one second in Brahma's life. When Brahma returned and he was seeing same cows, same calves, same cowherd boys. He thought, "Krishna, would He?-- very clever. He has come to learn that I have kept those calves and cowherd boys in caves of the Sumeru mountain."

Lord Brahma went there ["Sumeru mountain"] and he saw the same calves, same cowherd boys-they were sleeping. Again, he came to the Vraja and they are moving. Several times He was going there and coming-he has got four heads. He was seeing there also the same calves and cowherd boys and here also, very clever? Enchanting.

"In past lives I must have committed a great offense. While they were taking food, I lifted them. Krishna will not approve. He took absolute shelter of Krishna.

Seeing that Incomparable Nanda-nandan Krishna

After that he was seeing no cowherd boys, no calves no Vasudev murtis. Sri Krishna with left-hand palm with rice mixed with yogurt and also, flute is inside the waist. And under the left armpit that stick and horn standing there. He was seeing all Vasudev murtis were emanating from that Nanda-nandan Krishna. Who is the cause of Vasudev. Then he started prayers. You will find in the Srimad Bhagavatam, Tenth Canto.

-Questions-

Vrindavan Bihari Prabhu: When you come here its like we get Vaikuntha association. But then when you leave I am afraid that the maya will attract me to the mind, music and material enjoyment.

Srila Gurumaharaj: This is very comfortable we can write articles there in the house. There will be no difficulty, it is not hot-nothing, temperate climate. Very hot, very cold-nothing. It is congenial place for writing. It is good. But, if we have got some affinity for the attachment to this, then, at the time of death we shall repent, because we shall be forced to be taken

from this, and be born there-at Sri Mayapur. Is it good? Or any other place in India where it is very hot, it is burning. Then you will pray to the Lord please take me, take me, take me, take me, I do not want to remain in this world. But if you remain here, you will not want to leave this place.

Arjuna has put one question to Krishna,

cancalam hi manah krsna pramathi balavad
drdham \ tasyaham nigraham manye vayor
iva suduskaram \\ (Gita 6.34)

Arjuna said: Mind is very restless, it is very difficult to control this mind even more than wind. It is difficult to control this mind. How can I control this mind?"

asaMSayaM mahAbAho mano
durnigrahaM calam \ abhyAsena tu
kaunteya vairAgyeNa ca gRhyate \\
(gItA 6.35)

"Yes, I admit mind is very restless." But it cannot be controlled by your efforts. It can be controlles by abhyAsena tu kaunteya vairAgyeNa ca gRhyate (gItA 6.35) vairAgya has got two meanings-one is negative, non-attachment to transient worldly objects + positive, attachment to the Lord, Who is Eternal Reality, All-Existence, All-Knowledge, All-Bliss. Immediately if you have concentrated your mind on the object of worship but that previous impression will misdirect you to other places, to sadness, not real bliss. And try to meditate on Krishna. Unknowlingly, your mind has gone to some other places-Maui and some other places-New York.

"Oho, I have contemplated concentrating on my object of worship and my mind has gone to some other place." Again you will try; again your mind will go, because after lakhs of births you have got previous impressions in the store of your mind and when you meditate, those things will come.

Without 'Sadhana' nobody can get the object of worship

But gradually, that will go. You have to perform abhyasena; abhyasena means repeatedly. When a boy tries to walk several times the boy falls down but that boy does not stop. He tries to stand and ultimately, he can stand. You have to go. Without penance, without sadhana [spiritual practice], nobody can get the object of worship. And vairagya-we should have indifference and abnegation towards the temporary things of the world. Non- attachment is the negative meaning of vairAgya. An attachment-the real meaning of vairagya:

*visaya vinivarttante niraharasya dehinah *

*rasa-varjjam raso'py asya param drstva nivarttate *

(Gita 2.59)

You have got love for, attachment to God-Supreme lord, who is all bliss. Automatically your attachment towards this world is removed-automatically. It is the positive side of vairagya and the negative side you have to perform this sadhana--definitely try.

The vision of Haridas Thakur's loud chanting

Tom Caprio: We talk about being blissful. What is the level of being in bliss? Because when we chant and chant, it is hard for me to chant Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna and to be locked in to it-my mind keeps going off. I really have to concentrate like that. Sometimes, I am really lucky if I can do one round concentrating on Krishna because I'll be doing one bead, two bead three bead-...I am on 20 bead and I do not know how I got there. But my mind being thinking about this and that and this and that and I m pulled back again. It s very difficult to keep focused sometimes.

Srila Gurumaharaj: For that reason, Caitanya Mahaprabhu taught us

through Haridas Thakur, jappam. If you perform jappa you will have mental diversion. But you should perform chanting in the holy company of the shuddha-bhaktas. If you chant loudly, you will hear about Krishna Krishna, Krishna-no sounds of this world will come. That is, if always you will be hearing Radha Krishna Radha Krishna Radha Krishna, you will have concentration. For us loud chanting you will have concetration. For us loud chanting:

sei duti katha, bhulo' na sarvvatha, uccaihsvare koro
harinama-robo \ phalgu aro yukta, baddha, aro mukta, kabhu
na bhaviho 'ekakara' sobo \\ («Vaisnava ke?» by Srila
Prabhupad Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur)

Our parama-gurudev-his advise, his guidance is that we should loudly chant, uccaiHsvare. Those who do not loudly chant Krishna, that is not correct yukta-vairagya, that is falgu- vairagya. You have seen in India there is one river; outside it seems like that its only sand, but inside there is undercurrent.

If you do not loudly chant the Holy Name, the Holy Name's Grace will not come to you-His grace will not come to you, His remembrance will not come to you. So your enjoying spirit, your ulterior motives will not be removed; that will be there. Outside this place is there-this place of abnegation is there. Outside you may be saying, "I am a renouncer,"-self-denial.
But inwardly there will be-you are wildly thinking about these objects of sensual enjoyment. This is falgu-vairagya-pseudo vairagya.

The heart of living is to be able to hear

In actual vairagya, you will devote your mind towards Sri Krishna. How? If we loudly chant it will be good for you and it will be good for all the other living beings of this world.
Because the Name and the Named are the same and if you loudly chant, you will have concentration. And heart of living is to be able to hear, Krishna, Krishna, Krishna. They have forgotten Krishna and for that reason they have come to this world. They will remember it, they may not be able to utter it-but they can hear. But here is is, "No permission, no

noise."

When I was in San Francisco, Ram das Prabhu said: You can perform Sankirtan at my temple there (Hawaii) but not here (San Francisco). If you do it, they will complain. Not so loudly, no. I have come to this place (Hawaii). Such a place here also if you do loudly, the adjoining person will complain to the police and they will come, "What is this?" Is it so?

But in India there are many mosquitoes in every hall, but you can do Harinam wherever anywhere you like-sankirtan. By spiritual devotional performance in your association. In a holy place performing bhajan everybody knows they are to do this. In some cities you have to take permission for control of the route if you want to take a procession for attracting.

How can we change the heart's operation?

Vrindavan Das Prabhu: How does one change the heart? Because even sometimes you can chant many lifetimes, chanting Hare Krishna according to order, but still, the heart is not changing. What one has to do to get heart?

Srila Gurumaharaj: For this one has to go to suddha-bhakta because we have got inwardly-we are uttering the name Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna-but we have got this conception of self, "I am this body" and bodily interests predominate our heart. We are chanting the name and thinking, "I am having difficulty; Oh Lord, I am in difficulty, I require another 50,000 dollars, please rescue me, Hare Krishna Hare Krishna".

He will see in your heart-according to your hearts desire, He will see. You are not wanting Krishna from your heart. You are trying to remove your problems. If sincerely anybody wants Krishna, immediately he will get. But because we can't sincerely utter-we are habituated here, "I do not want to leave this Honolulu." Where we will be taken we do not know? And if Krishna comes, he will say: "I will take you to Vrindavan, it is a hot place, but its a very good place." So you will leave this place and there will very great difficulty there. I shall have to beg alms. You won't be able to go with Krishna in Vrindavan. You are uttering the name of Krishna and Krishna comes, "I have come-now, come along!"

No, no-i have got these nice hog family responsibilities

As when Indra had become hog by the curse of his Gurudev, he came to the world. Brahma, knowing this when all the demigods told Brahma, "There is no monarchy on the throne in heaven, the chair is vacant."

Brahma inquired, "Where is Indra?"-'He is gone; he is gone to the Earth. He was cursed, he has taken the form of a hog." So, Lord Brahma went there to that place where Indra was a hog and he told: "Oh my dear sir (to the hog who is Indra) you are not a hog, you are a king, emperor of Heaven. Come along."

Then Indra [the hog] said: "Who are you? Why, I have got this nice hog society, beautiful wife, many children and I have got my duty."-like that.
But Krishna, He says:

*sarvva-dharmman parityajya mam ekam saranam vraja *

(Gita 18.66)

"Give up all of your duties. Take Absolute Shelter. I have come." And Indra said: "Who are you? I have got this hog society and many responsibilities. Many Obligations-many. I have got wife, children, etc.-Who are you? I don't agree with you. I won't leave, I won't leave, I won't leave this Honolulu.

Lecture in the Kapi Olani University

Honolulu, Hawaii

17 Feb 1998, 12:00 Noon

The engagement was arranged by Tom Caprio and was a combination of three classes making up roughly 200-300 students. One of the teachers gave

a fire offering with candle; another offered a " oM namaH sarasvtyai " class recitation to Srila Tirtha Maharaj who accepted all offerings graciously and began his lecture with the following:

At first I pay my prostrated obeisances to the lotus feet of my most revered Gurudeva Nitya lila pravistha Om Vishnupada astottasata Sri Srimad Bhakti Dayita Madhava Goswami Maharaj, Absolute Counterpart of the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna and pray for his causeless mercy to give me strength to sing the glories of the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna and his personal associates to purify my mind and to get exclusive devotion to the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna. I also pay my innumerable prostrate obeisances unto the lotus feet of my most revered Shiksha-gurus-instructor gurus-and pray for the causeless mercy to give me strength to sing the glories of the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna and his associates to purify my mind and to get exclusive devotion unto the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna. I pay my due respects to all.

This is the first time I have got the occasion to come to Hawaii. Last year I traveled to different places in the USA. Some friends and devotees there insisted on my coming to Hawaii. If you go there, it is very nice-it is temperate, good climate, everything is soothing. Swami Bhaktivedanta came here and he expressed his impression like this: "Hawaii is like a heaven." But I could not come last year due to precious commitments. So this year I have got the opportunity to come.

The "original cause" and "His instruments"

The original cause is Lords desire. We are only instrumental. Without the Lord's desire nothing can be done. If anybody says:" Yes, we can do anything without the approval then the Supreme Lord's will." Then, the Supreme Lord will lose His position. The Supreme Lord is Absolute. Even a tree cannot move without his sanction. We have come here by His will. The Supreme Lord is All-Good. Whatever we have done the Supreme Lord is All-Good. It is for our eternal benefit, for ourselves. We may not understand it because we have got no knowledge of the past and we do not know the future. Sometimes we are too little to understand the current happenings-we think these are not correct. But everything is correct, it is all for the best. Whatever is done by the Supreme Lord is All-Good.

Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's school of thought

By wearing this saffron cloth you can see that I am an ascetic sannyasi and I belong to Caitanya Mahaprabhu's school of thought. I come from India. I have got one difficulty. I must admit during the British administration, we had the occasion to speak English at different functions. In colleges, in universities and in other places, our most revered Gurumaharaj used to address the public gatherings, in English. By His order I had also this opportunity. During that administration we had occasion to speak for twenty or thirty years. But nowadays nobody wants to hear English. Everything is changed.

Now for thirty years I am attending many meetings in north India and even in south India.

Nobody wants to hear English. I have lost the habit of speaking English. At times, I cannot find the appropriate words to express my heart and that is my defect. So, I am not a good orator. I cannot satisfy you, so my request to you is, you please take the spirit of my words and not the words themselves. I may speak wrongly.

Now why you have invited my here. I am an ascetic sannyasi. Our Guru Maharaj has given this danda-I have got three sticks here. This reminds me you should keep it with you.
Engage your mind, senses and words for the service of the Supreme Lord and for nothing else. Your life is for only the worship of the Supreme Lord. This is to remind me. "You have to take this"-these three sticks here. And also this indicates knowledge acts to cut your attachment towards the world to take you to the Lord. For that reason I am to take this everywhere-it is called tridanda. So you have brought me here-usually I speak to spiritual persons who want to hear. But you are all students, so why you have brought me here?
Because I am also a student.

Secular Knowledge and Spiritual Knowledge [para-vidha]

You are students, and I am also a student. Because there are two kinds

of learnings or education. In sanskrit there is evidence

*dve vidye veditavye iti ha sma yad brahma-vido vadanti - -para caivapara ca * (muNDakopaniZat 1.1.4)

There are two kinds of education - --material knowledge and spiritual knowledge. parA- vidyA - -spiritual knowledge, superior knowledge: parA yayA tad akZaram adhigamyate., and aparA-vidyA - inferior knowledge, material kknowledge. Material knowledge you can get in this University in this material world. But there is another knowledge, it is called spiritual knowledge, superior knowledge-I am a student of that school-the school of Bhagavatam. We have got our institution. I have taken admission to that, so I am also a student.

Now actually in India you will find, they take shelter-they give more importance to spiritual knowledge, not material knowledge. Because human birth is precious. Your body after all, comes after a long transmigration-we find enough evidence in our scriptures there. We have to pass through many births:

*jalaja nava-laksani sthavara laksa-vimsatih *

krmayo rudra-san'khyakah paksinam dasa-
laksakam \\ trimsal-laksani pasavah catur-
*laksani manusah *

"Nine lakh [one lakh = 100,000] species of births of aquatic animals and twenty lakh births of plant and trees and herbs and also ten lakh births we pass through different kinds of worms and insects. Then there are ten lakh births of different species of birds and thirty lakh births of different species of animals. After that you have got this human birth."

The special "human" characteristic given by God

God has created human beings for His love-for happiness. God has given human beings the discriminative power between eternal and non-eternal. Other evidence is difficult to

understand-this discriminative power is for deciding what is good and bad and knowledge of the eternal. The human being has been given this special character by God-God has given.

If you deny this, then this human birth is futile, it is purposeless-only for eating, sleeping, mating and defending. All the animals and birds they are doing. But for that purpose, God has not created the human being, this human birth. After creating human birth, God was satisfied by the reading from Srimad Bhagavatam. Because God saw that, 'These human beings can worship Me, they have got the discriminitative power." So, He was satisfied.

What we should do?--we should give attention give attention to para-vidha. What is the difficulty of material education, secular education? What is the meaning of secular education? What is the word derivation-secular, should be secular. In the dictionary you will find "concerning worldly affairs". It is not spiritual and sacred. You consult the dictionary, the Oxford edition. Secular is concerned with worldly affairs only. It is not spiritual and at the same time, not sacred. Everybody is thinking of this education-it is not sacred. It is material. You can learn material things, not nominal things. Ultimately, it is an ego affliction.

Secular-what is the meaning of secular? Secularity means that quality and education is not based on religion. They say that secularity is not based-the quality and education is not based on religion. That is called "secular." But I want to bring your special attention to these things-they are rational things.

Our "Dharma" is not synonymous with your "Religion"

'Religion' and 'Dharma' are not synonymous. I was invited to lecture a few years back, to make a presentation at an annual function there in Calcutta-Formidable Religions. There will be representatives from different groups, different faiths. There, we were presenting the teachings of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu-the eternal message of divine love. You should preside and tell them that there should be no fight among inter-religious faiths. So, we have

come to request that you preside there. I was staying at that time in Calcutta so I could not refuse their request. I attended the function.

I told them that Religion and Dharma are not synonymous. We cannot find the appropriate word so we, in English we say 'religion' when we want to say Dharma. Religion means a system of faith, a system of worship, or it is written like this. It does not give recognition to a supernatural controlling power to which there must be obedience - the effect which would be converted to influence human society.

There is no word in English. Human beings they are like that. We must admit this. But there is faith; religious faith and religious worship - it is called a system of faith and a system of worship. This is called religion.

But dharma does not do that. Rig, the dharma root; Rig dharma, Rig dharma root, Rig means 'to open'? And its inflection, maupau. Dharma with inflection what 'quality'. Dharma means to suffer this ? Dharma means to dharma. Dharma to whom? To all the heritage, to all the society, to all the country, to all the continent, to all the whole world and universe. What we can describe? Like this. What are we using the word dharma? You may not beleive it, but you have to explain that on a different platform-alwar.

The platform of nobility: celibacy

Generally ten-fold dharma you will find:

One dharma is brahmacarya. Service, firmliness. It is celibacy to control the passions and deny your enjoyment. If anybody controls, whether he is doing injury regarding the society?

Have you saved them or you are saving their body? All lakhs of Calcutta will be increased. I ask you, "If you say if anybody performs celibacy, he will do harm-then he will be saved too-a spiritual effect. He is controlling his passions. You see? All the society-he is not concerned. He is not delivering pain. No. Cannot accuse him for that. For the whole of the society.

Sensibility-Bhagavata Shloka there is one verse-Satya-dharma-to speak Truth, truthfulness. Whether anybody who speaks Truth is doing harm to his family, the society, the country or the world? I ask him. What is that-speak to me. He

revealed that in every country you will find they are speaking lies, they are speaking things that are against-yet destroyed them. No problems are solved. Scam, scam, scam in the newspapers-same like this. General people, they will wrongly understand. They are being swayed. They must get advice from a real sannyasi, sadhu from India and that will be substance. No more only indication of the substance

Satya-tapasya also means to perform penance, austerity, etc. To withdraw the senses from the objects of the senses-tapasya. Tapasya, Dhan- by now all you have heard, "We shall enjoy, we shall not give to others." If you do not want to, you do not give; you only take, take, take-that will not hold your society or even your country. They are all hanging around and they are all takers-it is true. But you have taken help from different things believing the things of the world and the demigods, etc. You have to pay back or there will be some reaction.

Correct yourself by orthodox regulation

So you are to correct yourself with dhan-sphere of regulation. The regulation of this body; the regulation of bile, the regulation of your respiration, the regulation of urine. If there is no regulation, it will have no result-it will all end in chaos. And also another dharma your having the quality of forgiveness, tolerance. In other words, you are to be a good person.
And there are other qualities-non-violence-abstaining from doing three-fold effects, etc. Austere, non-violence, ahimsa and trying to lead your mind to purity. All this ten-fold dharma-whether this will destroy the society or does it support the society? I want to ask?

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu-he has told, "We are to propagate bhagavat-dharma" - bhagavat- dharma is the real dharma of the real self. If that dharma is manifested all these qualities will automatically come. If you pour water on the root of the tree, the whole tree will be nourished. Without pouring water on the root of the tree, splashing water on the branches and leaves, etc., although they are within the tree, they will not be nourished.

Therefore, for real dharma is, I will not use the word religion, the nature of the eternal self. This body is not the self. Nobody says that this body is the self. As soon as consciousness is there, it is considered to be the body. But when consciousness leaves, then that body is not considered to be the person. No dead body is considered to be the person-nobody!

Consciousness - the divine spark, atma

That consciousness is termed in our scriptures as the atma. It is known as existence, knowledge and bliss-sat-cit-ananda. And you will find--human beings beget human children; from horse we will get horse, from cow we will get cow and the same with other progeny. The seeds of the spiritual path are coming from the Absolute Spirit. That is called Godhead. He is Absolute Consciousness, Absolute Knowledge, Absolute Bliss-full in sat- cit-ananda.

*isvarah paramah krsnah sac-cid-ananda-vigrahah *

anadir adir govindah sarvva-karana-karanam \\ (Brahma-samhita, 5.1)

We have got connection there: that knowledge we should impart-character evolution should be there. When character is lost, everything is lost. It is said secondary to this, it is not based on religion; formality and education is based on religion. But, it is based on dharma, not religion. Expressing that, is Hare Krishna.

Without Relation, there is no Question of Love

Religion and Dharma are separate. If you have the measure of the function of the real self, if it is manifested, you can love the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna and you can see all the living beings of this world are connected from Sri Krishna. If I love Him, I cannot injure any of His parts. If I love Him I should love His All-Parts. If I love Him and I make injury to His hands and feet, etc. He will not allow. "If you love Me love My dog". It is said in this country, "If you love anybody, their dearest is your dearest. If you love the Supreme Lord, Oh that makes a big difference. That Divine Love can solve all problems. How can we get this? Lord Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu said, " In this Kali-yuga, we have got short life, we cannot perform sever penance, like in previous yugas, previous ages:

*kRte yad dhyAyato viZNuM tretAyAM yajato makaiH *
dvApare paricaryyAyAM kalau tad dhari-kIrttanAt \\ (bhA: 12.3.52)

This is also in our school of thought-there are four Yugas, four ages: Golden Age, Silver Age, Bronze Age, Iron Age. Satya, Treta, Dwarapa, Kali. In Satya-Yuga meditation was prescribed; In Treta-Yuga, Tirtha [pilgrimage to Holy Places] was prescribed because they could not perform meditation-they have got love for enjoyment, for sharp objects of the senses. They cannot perform meditation because the mind is restless so tirtha was prescribed. So then jnana and Krishna was the objective prescribed for Treta-Yuga. Wherever I shall stay I shall engage my senses for his service. In Dvarapa-Yuga, the populace cannot even perform yajnya so much attachment they have got for knowledge.

To know the necessity for devotion, to grasp and understand that knowledge, is necessary. But many are disturbed and so easily lament. Each day we are disturbed to getting things for our livelihood. Well understood. But human beings are unnecessarily engaged in violence in this aspect of Kali-Yuga. You are all influenced as long as you will be in this body. You are born in this body - why? This is not our real self. Yet we all admit it comes to that. If you take power - then, can I get that? Your real self you understand you have to have clear knowledge of what? You think, " I am this body," then the head of the body will be your body. You try for it. Nobody can take it. You think, "I am the astral body,"-mind and intellect, you try for intellectual faculty. Then you think, "I am spirit." You shall try for spiritual development.

The Irony of our Misconception, Misidentity

Whenever we will find that I am eternally existing, we are often relieved. Do you want to die? Like this-is there any sentient being who wants to die? No sentient being wants to die. They have got the demand to remain in this world eternally. But due to the illusory potency of the Supreme Lord, we think that, "I am this body." The body has its birth; it will have its

death. We are afraid of - death. But in your heart you have got the demand to

live eternally because your real self is eternally existing. You cannot have the desire to live in this worldly plane. This is required. The knowledge principle says that devoid of knowledge, we have got demand for - knowledge - purest of all.

Of all knowledge, we want to see all the tracks. So we shall all go to Big Island to see the Volcano - very big. Why? Because this knowledge principle is there. And the knowledge principle, it is called cit. And Krishna Consciousness [sanskrit] where we are sat-cit-ananda, eternally existing. It is atma. Atma - without atma there is no satisfaction. Without atma, you cannot have satisfaction. You are running on the atma after material things. As long as we have a misconception of the self and we run after these things, this pain will not stop. When we stop running, the pain is gone.

How to get Love? Without Relation-It is all Lust

And we will find, "I am doing injury; I am doing injury to other living beings and other living beings are doing it to me!" For every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction. If your strategies commit harm also then you will be handed over to the higher reaction. We will always have to pay. When I injure other beings for my own satisfaction, that will come. By doing injury - himsa, -- you cannot get prema. So, you have to stop injuring others. And you have to love them - how to get love without relation?

If you love your own brother, dear and near ones, nobody has to teach you about this relation. But when you see your relation to all the living beings are coming from the same source, the Supreme Lord, and I am longing for that all attending duty to others who are related to the Cause. So if that is your actual realization to love - to have actual love. We say love but it is lust, not love. Any activity not engaged in Krishna's work both gross and subtle- it is lust. When you some persons are not able to fulfill your lust, no love shall be there. Actual love is love for God and relations to God. In this sacred domain, actual love is there. This human birth you have got, and you can get the Supreme Lord:

labdhva sudurllabham idam
bahusambhavante manusyam

*arthadam anityam apiha dhirah *
turnam yateta na pated anumrtyu
yavan
nihsreyasaya visayah khalu sarvvatah syat \\ (Bhag: 11.9.29)

nr-deham adyam sulabham
sudurllabham plavam sukalpam
*guru-karnadharam *
mayanukulena nabhasvateritam
puman bhavabdhim na taret sa atmaha \\ (Bhag: 11.20.17)

Srila Gurumaharaj: There cannot be more than one God, Supreme Lord. Supreme Lord is Absolute-Infinite. When we say Absolute, how can it be Infinite? That is to say, this mind with outside intelligence. Absolute complete reality cannot be divided. Absolute Complete is One. But you will find there are many demigods-Without the express permission of the potency of Truth. The Supreme Lord is One, Vishnu. And Vishnu has got different forms and pastimes. They are infinite forms and there are infinite pastimes to satisfy the devotees. There are infinite transcendental Realities. But the Supreme Lord, God as God has got opulences - six-fold opulences. Demigods are considered to be one of the six opulences. -
they have got some power from God. But they are not Supreme. They are subordinate. They are God's deputies. Those who have got material desires may go to them and to worship-so that will go to them. But the Gods and Godesses-sometimes they are tired. But when the real shuddha-bhakta comes, then they are happy - I have seen in Punjab. I was invited to speak at one Durga Temple function there.

We should not worship Goddess Durga - the external potency. Those who want mundane things, they worship her, but we worship Radhararani praying, "Please give Me one-pointed devotion to Lord Krishna."

Through the rays of the sun you can see the sun. All rays of the sun are accumulated due to Radha. Radharani's sun is sufficient. It is the Internal Potency. When I went there-[the gathering at the Durga Temple], I told the audience, "Why you are inviting me here?

Because Goddess Durga is tired. So you all come, 'Give me one child, give me money,' etc.- always disturbing so they are tired. They want to have company of shuddha-bhaktas, to hear--to see and hear nam-sankirtan from shuddha-bhakta, sad-guru. They do not want anything of this world. All the experiences here are useless. She has got that desire-spiritual desire."

These are demigods and ajnana worship which is prescribed for them, is an alternative-it is non-eternal. You have to understand our religion from an expert. Then you can understand. There is no need in worship of demigods.

Lecture Unitarian Church Program

17 February 1998

Honolulu, Ohau, Hawaii,

USA Unitarian Church

Program 7:30 PM

Srila Tirtha Maharaj: I request Tridandi Swami Bhakti Prakash Hrishikesh Maharaj to speak something. Your English will be correct, my English may be defective. I come from India, Bengal.

[for diacritics of acharyas see biography. Four sampradayas were not established on the appearance of SrI Krishna 5000 years ago, but much earlier. i.e. brahma-sampradAya at the time of secondary creation, etc. Their respective teachings were established in Kali-yuga also at different times by four principle acharyas. Although SrIman mahAprabhu blessed brahma-mAdhva-sampradAya by taking initiation in it, he embraced all the best features of each vaisnava sampradAya. SrI caitanya mahAprabhu is not yugAvatAr of SrI Krishna, but He is Krishna Himself, assuming the feeling and halo of His Absolute Counterpart SrI Radha and appearing at the time of yugAvatAr. The mission of yugavatar is included in Him]

BPH: Srila Gurumaharaj is coming from India, Bengal. Ah? He speaks Bengali, but he doesn't speak very good English-so he says. But he speaks better English than I do.

Anyway Bhakti Ballabh Tirtha Maharaj is from a mission called Sree Chaitanya Gaudiya Math. This is coming from Gaudiya Maths which is the grand group of missions which was started by Bhakti Ballabh Tirtha Maharaj's Param-Gurudev, Om Vishnupada Srila Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur, back in the 1920's and 1930's. This was called the Gaudiya Math. And from that came so many missions, from his disciples of which Bhakti Ballabh Tirtha Maharaj's Gurudev [Srila Madhava Maharaj] was one. So he started one of the Gaudiya Missions. So there must be about 40 of those missions in India. And this particular mission is one of the biggest, that He is presently presidess over as President- Acharya. These missions effectively carry the message of one of the Four Sampradayas which were established 5000 years ago on the appearance of Lord Sri Krishna.

Eleventh in the line from Chaitanya Mahaprabhu

This parampara, disciplic succession, is not like in Christianity. Christianity does not really have a parampara. But in India things are done in that way: from man to man, to man ..., from master to master, to master...This parampara extending 5000 years back to Lord Sri Krishna when there were four lines set up. This is one of those lines, but this line is known most famously because of the appearance of Lord Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu 500 years ago in this line. He didn't appear in all four lines, but he appeared in this line. So in that way this line is particularly significant. So Bhakti Ballabh Tirtha Mj is 11th Acharya, the 11th successor in the line from Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, who was the Yuga-avatara, that is the incarnation of Krishna for this age, only 500 years ago which is just like one moment in the time span of the millennium .

Now, what is the significance of listening to such a Bengali who doesn't know any English, what is the significance in listening to someone like this. He is giving this Vedic Siddhanta- it means the conclusion of Vedas which was brought to us 5000 years ago by Dvaipayana Vyasadev, a literary incarnation of The Supreme Lord Sri Krishna at that time. This is comprised in volumes and volumes of Vedic literature, some of which you might been exposed to, such as Srimad Bhagavatam and Upanishads. You might have heard of some

of them. They are voluminous. And this literature has one objective, basically one objective, which is to relieve the human entity, human beings-not the animals-but the human beings of their attachment and mis-identity with matter. Attachment to matter and mis-identity, that I am matter; in fact, that I am this body. So the misidentify that I am this body and the attachment to everything that I have here. This is the main crux of the Vedas. And if I am wrong you will please correct me.

This the basic idea that these four sampradayas brought as they descended down 5000 years to try to disseminate this kind of education. This education is not the traditional kind of education that we think of. Traditionally when we go to an educational institution we apply our cleverness and our skills to try to learn something to ascend on a platform so speak. So we become stronger and more intelligent and more capable. But this particular means of education is the reverse of that. How so? All knowledge is contained in the Supreme and it is disseminated by Him in a descending fashion-not in ascending fashion. Knowledge comes from up to down, not from down to up.

Ascending knowledge versus descending knowledge

In other words we have-in our technocratic society-we have some assumption that this age is the most advanced age in human civilisation. Isn't it? Don't we think about ourselves like that-we have gone to the moon, we have developed the micro-micro miniminimini-micro- chip and so many things that our technocratic age has done. It is so advanced.

But in fact, we find that in former ages there was more spiritual significance and more power and more of this descending knowledge than of this ascending knowledge prevalent in recent ages. And in fact, the human being is not happy with ascending knowledge because the ascending knowledge tends to send him to the periphery of his existence, whereas descending knowledge pulls him to the Center. The Center being God, being spirit, being Supreme being. So if he receives anything from the Supreme. Isn't it more centered? If he serves that Supreme, isn't he more in harmony with the Center? Than if he goes and tries to acquire knowledge in an ascending fashion to make himself more capable to do what? To identify with this material wealth. So, he is going further and further away from God. I can see that I am getting through to nobody. I better give it over to Bhakti Ballabh Tirtha Mj. He is the eleventh in the line and a completely charming speaker and I am sure you will enjoy what

he has to say. Hare Krishna.

Srila Tirtha Maharaj: This is for the first time I have got the experience of Hawaii Islands. I was in New York and other places last year and I met many friends there. They arranged many programs in different parts of USA. And some of the friends insisted on my going to, that is, to coming to this place. "You go there you will be happy." When Swami Mj came to Hawaii once. He was satisfied. "It is like a heaven."

I told them, "I have my fixed programs. And for these fixed programs I have come here. I cannot spare time to go to Hawaii now. I shall think about it next year. If God wills, then I will go."

Now it the will of Supreme Lord, that I have got the opportunity to come here. The place is good, the climate is moderate. So it's soothing; it is good for writing articles. There is no disturbance here. Moderate climate. But if you will go to India, in summer season very hot and there is also load shedding-sometimes you will not get electricity. Then, no fan etc., no air cooler, so it is difficult to write. And in cold season of course, Calcutta and other places in Bengal it is soothing but in North India, it is very cold. You will find extreme climate. Here the climate is suitable.

Remembering will bring you eternal benefit

But the thing is this-nothing is good if there is no scope of remembering God-nothing. We may be in Hawaii, we may be in another place-good place. But you will not get actual eternal benefit if you do not remember Supreme Lord, who is All-Good.

If say we will not believe in God. I have seen Swami Maharaj while delivering his speeches in some places, He said, "There are some people who say, 'We do not believe in God. We do not believe in the existence of God. We have not seen Him.'"

Then he gave his reply like this. "Who has given you the power to say, 'I do not believe in God?' I do not believe in God-how we can say these words? Who has given you the power? Those who do not believe God at least the all contriving spirit, it is contriving to the whole world. Those who don't believe this, they are either fool number one or mad." That was his impression. Is

there any sentient being in the world, who does not believe in God? Can you prove it? I do not believe in God, but I go to a rich man, wealthy person and submit to him to get some money. Invoke his superior, I am submitting to him-who is God? We say God Bhagavan. What is the meaning of Bhagavan? Bhaga means wealth, ishvarya; van means who possesses wealth.

Aisvaryyasya verse (explanation of Bhagavan) see in Tom's place lecture.

You will find evidence in Vishnu Purana. He has got totality of the six-fold opulences, who possesses this, he is called Bhagavan. You say God, we say Bhagavan. Totality of wealth, totality of power: visambadha viryashya jagrsriya; fame, beauty, renunciation, knowledge. Where you will find totality of this opulences, he is called Bhagavan. You are believing it in this world. You may not believe Supreme Lord, but you are submitting to small gods who possesses this sort of qualities, Even wrestler submits to a better expert wrestler to learn wrestling.

Everyone surrenders to the opulence of God

I had been to one college this noon there were many students. Why they have got admission in this college or university? They can read in their house. If they submitted to the professors and the teachers-because they are experts-they also believe in God; they are superior in this learning. They are submitting. I may not submit to Supreme Lord, but I am submitting to many persons who are having better qualities in order to get that knowledge.

Even you will find the dog has got the belief. A small dog-not strong, but weak-when he meets with the strong dog. That dog thinks, "I will not be able to fight with this dog." He lies down with his back on the ground, that dog lies down. He surrenders, you will find. Even an ant, if he sees a big ant, he gives up the path to that ant. Everywhere you will find it is the belief of God is innate in the nature of every self.

Supreme Lord is full of completeness

If we cannot believe persons with all things, with all, with some qualities, what is the harm of believing in God who has got infinite kinds of potencies.

It's our ill-luck. We do not submit to God, but we submit to worthless persons, to Prime-Minister, to Ministers, to other worldly persons. It is our ill-luck, if we don't believe in God, God will lose nothing; He is Infinite. He is competent. If we believe God we shall be benefited by his grace. He can protect us, rescue us under all circumstances. If you have got belief in Him, you will not die:

om purnam adah purnam idam purnat purnam
udacyate \ purnasya purnam adaya purnam
*evavasisyate *
*om santih santih santih *
(Isopanisat, santi-path)

He is full of completeness. There is nothing outside him. For getting the belief in god we should have company of such persons who have got the belief. They can help us in this matter. We belong to Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's school of thought. Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, in his teaching you will find, in short, he had written eight shlokas, it is called Shikshastaka. In Shikshashtaka in the First shloka he has taught us-you can get everything by the worship of Sri-Sri Radha-Krishna.

ceto-darpana-marjjanam bhava-maha-davagni-
nirvvapanam sreyah kairava-candrika-vitaranam
vidya-vadhu-jivanam \ anandambudhi-varddhanam
pratipadam purnamrtasvadanam sarvvatma-snapanam
*param vijayate sri-krishna-san'kirttanam * (Siksastaka,
1)

Chanting Sri Krishna, hare krishna, maha-mantra, to glorify, He is singing the glories of the chanting of Radha-Krishna. By chanting Radha-Krishna we can purify our mind, cleanse our mind, remove all kinds of human disease from the mind-positive attainment. Our main defect is this; we have

got no knowledge of our real self. We think, "I am this body." But in fact, you will find that nobody in this world believes this body to be the person.

No one really believes this body is the person

We cannot prove it. A dead body can be kept and in fact, by chemical procedure for a long time. But that dead body is not to be considered by any country anywhere as a person, if there is no consciousness in that. When consciousness exists, then you say, "He is a person." When consciousness leaves the body, then a dead body has no reality. If any child is born you have got here I think, a corporation of officers. We enter that baby or that child as they used to. When anybody dies, he will cut it down.

Practically, nobody is believing this body to be the person. If it is cremated, if it is buried or if it is devoured by beasts and birds, nowhere will you find in any country-theistic country or atheistic country-that he will be prosecuted. If the dead body is burned, as per system, different system or buried or devoured by beasts and birds, they do not consider the dead body to be a person-collectively. As long as consciousness is there, that is designated as atma-in our scriptures, eternally existing principle-atma.

na jayate mriyate va kadacin

*nayam bhutva bhavita va na bhuyah *

*ajo nityah sasvato'yam purano na hanyate nahyamane sarire * (Gita 2.20)

"That atma has got no birth, they have got no death. It is not born, it is not burned." Always it is born, it is dying-it is not the fact. As body has birth, it will die. Atma has got no birth, no death. It this body is killed, atma is not killed. Eternally existing-atma. The real self is eternal.

Once I had been to Punjab during the life-time of our Gurudev. He was there.

He went there to inaugurate one function. All-Punjab Religious Conference on Jaya Krishna Ji and Advent Anniversary of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. I was with him. He stayed in one doctor's house and we stayed in one guest house just opposite to that house on the other side of the road.

Srila Madhava Maharaj exposes the apparent truth

Many devotees came from different parts of Punjab and other places. Our Gurumaharaj was going to inaugurate the festival at 8 PM that evening. Shorlty before that time, two or three cars came there and some prominent persons of the city got name in newspapers and we have come to meet you, to talk to you. Please give us time." Then Gurumaharaj told them, "We had invited many devotees here, to inaugurate this function. If I do not go there, then the function will be spoiled. You come next morning , then I shall have ample time to talk to you."

They said, "No, we shall leave this place tonight-this night. We have got no time to stay. Kindly please give us time."

Then the owner of the house, he came, Dr. K. N. Kapoor. He was the local man-he recognised these persons. Some prominent persons of the city and also, one income tax officer was there, Mr. Pandey. He requested our Gurumaharaj we should stay for some time, at least 15 minutes. I am informing that you may go 15 minutes after to inaugural function. We should stay here for some time.

What is the complexion of your mind-black or white?

Then Gurumaharaj returned and I was with Gurumaharaj. I saw it and also I heard it with my own ears. Mr. Pandey after going to bring Gurumaharaj back-I turned around and I saw they were there-sitting on the ground. Pandey sahib told, "I don't believe in atma. Because that which is not perceived, which I cannot touch, which I cannot see-I don't believe in its existence. I had come to you to get the replies of twenty questions." I have not seen our Gurumaharaj in an unbalanced state in any way, in any time. I have never seen. He was always sober. Gurumaharaj replied: he asked me to give him one paper and pen. I gave him paper and pen.

Gurumaharaj said, "Tell them about advent-anniversary. I should reply by

writing twenty questions, 15 minutes will I have passed." Then, Gurumaharaj told him, "If I could reply at least 5 minutes for each question, I require 100 minutes. I could not stay here. If I will not go there that whole function will be spoiled. They have spent many lakhs for us, for bringing us from Calcutta and for making arrangement it will not be good. So you come next day and I shall reply to all your questions."

"No, we should leave today, please kindly please advise me for a minute. Please advise me. Please tell me one incantation, mystic syllable mantra, so that I can get peace of mind. My mind is always restless, I've got no peace of mind. With great hope I've come to you, please advise me." Then Gurumaharaj smiled.

Gurumaharaj left that room and came out on the road and Pandy was also going and I was also with Gurumaharaj. Mr. Pandey was following. Gurumaharaj smiled. "You are deceiving me Mr. Pandey."

"Who says, Swami Ji? I am not deceiving you. I am sincerely speaking, I have got no peace of mind, please give me advice. You are actually deceiving me. Why are you repeating the same?" Then Gurumaharaj told him, "Have you seen your mind? Have you seen the your mind with your eyes? What is the form of mind? What is the complexion? Black or white? Have you seen it? Have you touched it? Whether it is short or hard? You have not touched the mind, you have not seen the mind, there is no mind. So there is no question of its restlessness."

The soul cannot be destroyed-by anything!

Then Pandey Sahib said, "Although I have not seen form of the mind, I have not touched it. By the quality of thinking even we , I think that there is my mind." So Gurumaharaj says- this is the reply, "First you have come here and say, 'I don't believe if I don't see it, if I don't touch it.' You haven't seen mind, you haven't touched it. But you are saying that you are believing in the existence of mind. How? So, like that, what is the value of these senses. material senses. By a stick if you can penetrate this and hurt this mind, in a moment, the whole visual faculty will be destroyed. In a moment, I can destroy it. If I perforate your the ear with the stick the whole world of sounds you are hearing, it will be stopped in a moment. And you are saying these material senses, "If I have experience with these material senses, that is reality." Being a learned man, you are saying this. What have you got if these

material senses-if they destroyed? Mind is there. Mind is not destroyed, and intellect is even finer than the mind:

*manasas tu para buddhir buddher yah paratas tu sah *

(Gita 3.42)

And soul is finest, finer than the others. It cannot be destroyed. When atom bomb was hurled in Japan, all the gross thing were destroyed, but sky is existing now. The sky is finer than atom bomb, could not destroy the sky, but mind is finer than sky, intelligence is finer than mind and soul is the finest. And the cause of soul is Paramatma, how can it be destroyed?

I talked with some persons there in Phoenix. They told me, "We have gone through your Gita, Gita is adored by all kinds of persons in this world-Gita. So we have gone trough Gita. But I don't believe Krishna is Bhagavan."

Then I said, "Why do find it so?"

"Because Krishna was born, Krishna is a human being, He may be Super Human Being, he may be diplomat, he may be a politician. But I don't believe He is Bhagavan."

"But you have come through Gita, where you find Krishna was a diplomat .Give one evidence from Gita, that Krishna is diplomat. Is it in Gita? Show me one evidence. No. There you will find just opposite, Krishna is the Supreme:

*yasmat ksaram atito'ham aksarad api cottamah *

*ato'smi loke vede ca prathitah purusottamah *

(Gita 15.18)

"I am more than jivas, I am supremely better, superior to Brahma-Paramatma, so I am called Purushottama."

*mattah parataram nanyat kincid asti dhanan jaya *

(Gita 7.7)

"There is nothing is superior to me," with great assertion he is saying. Just the opposite you will find. You have gone through the Gita, you could not believe the teachings of Gita, what is the use of going through Gita? In Gita this body not the self, it is instructed there. Krishna instructed that this body is not the self. Atma is the self. What is the cause of our afflictions in this world? Why have you come here? Chaitanya Mahaprabhu says our cause of affliction is forgetfulness of our relationships with Supreme Lord Sri Krishna. You have forgotten him. Even if you will get immense wealth in this world you will not be happy. In this world rich persons are not happy.

The richest country has the highest suicide rate

When Dr. Radhakrishnan was President, our Indian Union Country adopted Radhakrishnan Statement, we have seen in newspapers about world statistics. He said, "The richest country is America, but cases of suicide and mad persons are most in the rich persons there. He was a Philosopher. Our Gurumaharaj went the Government meeting when he became President. He was so abandoned how he will give me-the President. Gurumaharaj was astonished! He is a philosopher, a good person.

He cannot speak a lie, "They may be rich, they may be Prince, but they have got no peace. They commiting suicide. So in this world rich persons are not happy, poor are also not happy. So those who are religious are not happy, those who atheists are not happy.
Happiness is incurred only in harmony with the Supreme Lord. If you churn the water, can you get butter from water? By churning water? There are no ingredients of butter in water. How you can get? All your efforts will be futile. But if you can churn milk or you can churn yoghurt, then you can get butter. Like that, if you always cultivate these non-eternal things and devoid of knowledge, devoid of bliss, it seems to be this worldly sac-cid-ananda, but actually it is not sac-cid-ananda.

Floating mirages, pink submarines and real ananda

When the sun's rays reflect in a desert, we see the span of water, clean water from a distance, but there no water. If we run towards that to quench our thirst, we cannot get. That is illusion. It seems to be water, but there is no water. If we can get water, we can quench our thirst. We require ananda, but we are running after phantasmagoria-mirage. When we become averse to Sri Krishna, who is All-Existence, All-Knowledge, and All-Bliss-we see only the shadow. That shadow it can be called maya in our sanskrit word. Ma-Ya, a technical word. Ma-means 'not', Ya-means 'that'. Not that-Maya. There is one meaning of it. It actually is not eternally existing, but we think it is eternally existing. Actually not knowledge, devoid of knowledge, but we think it is knowledge.

The shadow of the internal potency is devoid of bliss

If we see the shadow of the tree, we may think it as tree, but there is no substance in it. Like that. Maya is the shadow of the internal potency of Supreme Lord Sri Krishna. We think it to be the eternally existing principle, but it is not. This world is not eternal, the changing always, the non-eternal, devoid of knowledge, devoid of bliss, joy.

*anityam asukham lokam imam prapya bhajasva mam *

(Gita 9.33)

"You have forgotten this-I am all bliss. So you have come to this world. This is anitya. This is not eternal. There is no existence of ananda here. You worship me, continually."

"I do not believe. I have got no belief." For that reason you are deprived. Forgetfulness Even He, out of affection, He is descending in this world and advising us, we do not believe in it. Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaj has given one instance for this. I have cited it in different places. It is very impressive.

The obstinate emperor of heaven

Once Indra-Emperor of the Heaven, was cursed by his Gurudev and he became a hog in this world. And all demigods went to Brahma "There is no Emperor in Heaven to govern. How can we do?"-'What is the matter?'-"Indra was cursed by Brihaspati for committing some offence and he became hog. He is now in the world."-Lord Brahma told, "Yes, I am going."

Brahma came in this world and met that hog, "Oh my dear Sir, you are not a hog. You are the Emperor of heaven. Why have you come here? You take your position. Come along." Then the Emperor-that hog, in the form of the hog, in the form of Indra, he said, "Who are you? Who are you? I cannot go. I have got many duties here. I have got this nice hog's society, beautiful wife and children. I cannot go with you. Who are you?"-Forgetfulness.

Brahma came and told him, "You are not hog." But he is not believing. Like that Krishna gave him, "You are my eternal servant, you can get immense ananda."

That which brings real joy is power or sweetness?

By becoming God we cannot get ananda, but by becoming servitor of God we can get ananda. If we become, if we try to merge with God, we may not have the ability to taste God. God is All-Sweet. It is better to become a servitor. You are very fortunate, you are the servitor of Supreme Lord Sri Krishna who is All-Bliss. You can get that. They do not know it-infinite ananda. "Worship Me"-the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna appeared in this world and said:

sarvva-dharmman parityajya mam ekam
saranam vraja \ aham tvam sarvva-papebhyo
moksayisyami ma sucah \\ (Gita 18.66)

"You give up all your religious duties and take absolute shelter to Me."

man-mana bhava mad bhakto mad yaji mam

namaskuru \ mam evaisyasi satyam te pratijane
*priyo'si me *
(Gita 18.65)

"Give your mind to Me, you serve Me, you perform worship of Me. You surrender to Me and I will give you assurance you will get Me." He told. And, our reply is "Who are you? We are very good, we have got many responsibilities, many obligations. We have got our nice family, children, wife etc. Who are you? I don't know you." We say like that. What can be done? We have forgotten our real self.

Pink submarines and the point of truth-harinam

For that reason God Himself appears in this world out of compassion and when he does not come, he sends his own persons to remind us, "You are running after phantasmagoria. You will not get ananda there. You will get just the opposite. You remember that. How you can remember? We can remember by chanting Hare Krishna. You cannot meditate now. In this Kali-yuga, Black Age it is not possible, because only one point is there. That point is truth- Harinam. And three of the four pious qualities are demised in Kali-yuga.

In Satya-yuga there four kinds of right characteristics-tapasya, shaucha, daya, shannta-in their actions. At that time people can meditate, their mind will be calm and serene. At that time-but not now. Tapasya shoucha daya-people can perform immense penance, austerities- there is purity, compassion and truth. But in Treta-yuga one quality less, there is no penance, so they could not perform meditation in Treta-Yuga, Daivik lost in Treta-Yuga.

Give up your objects of attachment to the Supreme Lord

So, Rishis, Munis prescribed yajyas, you have got your attachment to the objects of the world, we will give it to the service of the Lord. Your objects of attachment if it's given to the Lord, then you will go to Lord. That is the science. To get concentration, you cannot meditate. In Dvapara-yuga-another quality less-there is no purity. You are given to senses, sense gratification,

you cannot utter mantra rightly. So sacrifice, this sort of sacrifice, is not possible. In Dvapar-yuga, you perform worship of deities. Engage all your senses for the service of the Lord, so that you can get concentration of object of worship.

In Kali-yuga, we even cannot perform worship and rise up early. We cannot rise up earlier. We rise at 8:00 AM, 9:00 AM-whenever it suits us. How can we perform worship? Early morning you have to rise. In our Karttik-Vrata, we observe Karttik-Vrata, Damodar-Vrata. From morning 4:00 AM to evening 10:00 PM there is always program. You have to rise up at 3.30 AM. "No, we cannot rise up."-"then you cannot perform puja." This sort of small penance you cannot perform for one month in Karttik-Vrata. You will go on sleeping, sleeping and sleeping. "How we can perform?" Some penance should be there. Without any penance, without any sadhana, nobody can get Krishna. We have no aptitude to rise up early, to remember Krishna. How can we get Him? So we should perform Harinam. We cannot do this worship of Deities. We are always sleeping. Your health, your body is not competent to perform worship of Deities. Such is your position. What to do? You must perform hari- kirtana. Chant Hare Krishna-by sleeping in the bed; by rising from the bed, where ever it is, by walking, remembering. You should loudly chant for some time. But it is very difficult.

That domain where name and named are identical

When I was there in San Francisco, Ramdas Prabhu told me, "You do not perform loudly harinam, because other persons may object, police will come and instruct you, "Please you cannot do now, this not India, this is America." Not to speak of nagar-sankirtan. If you perform japam in your mind, then if there is any sound, your mind will be diverted. But if you will perform Kirtan, you are hearing Harinam. Harinam and hari are one and the same. Name and Named are identical. When you perform Krishna-nama, Krishna will come.
There is no bar there. In material sounds there is bar.

If you utter water, by uttering water you cannot quench your thirst. You have to take, to drink water thing. Water thing and water word are different, you will find in this world. But Krishna Name and Named are identical. There is no

difference. So if anybody utters Krishna, Krishna, He will come. When he is hearing Krishna, he is remembering Krishna, his attention will be there. If you loudly chant the holy name, then no sounds of this world will come. The pollution, environment pollution-how can we remove that pollution? By chanting the Holy Name, by blowing the conch-shell-it should not be stopped. You can stop this material sound, physical sound-that is good. But if you stop transcendental spiritual sound, it will be a great misfortune. If that is performed, the whole world will be purified-all pollution.

Drowning in an ocean of ambrosia

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu sung the Glories of sankirtan. "By performing sri krishna sankirtan we can purify our mind. When mind is purified, all desires are removed. There will be no conflagration, no perspiring for the three-fold afflictions. All afflictions will be removed."

Second attainment:

ceto-darpana-marjjanam bhava-maha-davagni-
nirvvapanam sreyah kairava-candrika-vitaranam

" And we shall get eternal welfare. We shall remove our afflictions and means. Vidya vadhu jivanam-para vidya-spiritual knowledge, that, "I am not of this world. I am of Krishna. I am eternally connected with Krishna. I am his eternal servant." By chanting the Holy Name you will get that knowledge. When you will have that knowledge, "I am of Krishna," then with love, you can worship Sri Krishna. You can chant the Holy Name. At that time you will be drowned in the ocean of ambrosia. Bliss you can get at that step. At every step, Krishna-nama cannot become stale. Krishna is Infinite, his name is Infinite, you cannot finish Him. You can chant millenium years of infinite time, but you can not finish the taste of Krishna- nama. ' pratipadaM pUrNAmRtAsvAdanam---- complete ambrosia you can have, taste of complete a rare state. And your mind and body and everything, soul will be purified, sanctified. By uttering Hare krishna-mahamantra you can get everything-all attainments, but we have got no belief.

Questions

Question: Can you explain somehow how the soul comes in contact with the material energy, but the origin of the soul is spiritual, so how it comes in contact with material energy?

Srila Gurumaharaj: In quality, the soul is conscious unit and has got thinking, feeling and willing. These are the qualities of consciousness. So God has given this relative independence to every spirit soul. You can go another side. If he is forced to do one side, then he has become inert. He has got no value. God can do-can forcibly do-but then he will be reduced to inert. God will not get any benefit and that sensual being will not get any benefit. So He appears and tries to advice him to submit to Him by his own will, by doing good with his own will. He is not forcing. He himself comes and he sends his own persons. If he does it forcibly, then it will become matter.

Question: Why the soul, who knows Krishna or does not know Krishna-why doesn't he want to go to spiritual world, before he comes to the material world?

BBTM: When the soul is there, when, by the misuse of the relative independence they become averse to Sri Krishna-they want to enjoy this world. And they have got the aptitude to enjoy the world. Krishna has got affection for his own sons-we are all sons of Krishna.
When you will find parents, when their sons and daughters they want something-bad things- then, sometimes out of affection they do not disturb them.

The greatest opportunity of the

human being Question: Not coming

from Vaikuntha?

BBTM: Not coming from Vaikuntha-from marginal potency. They coming from tatshtha- shakti-marginal potency. Now when they come, they desire. Then Krishna created infinite brahmanda's and created many species . "You go through it and enjoy if you want to." After enjoying, passing through 80 lakhs of births, through aquatics, animals, birds, trees, etc.
When he gets this precious human birth, Krishna gives him discriminative power between eternal knowledge and non-eternal knowledge, "You think now: you want to enjoy this world or you want this to come to Me. Worship Me."-'No, I do not want this because there are many miseries. There are many births and at the time of birth in mother's womb I had the great pain there. And then, I got three-fold afflictions. I do not want, I want to remain. Then he comes here.

Question: So Krishna exposing himself that he is lacking something, he is wanting rasa- exchange of the jiva?

Srila Gurumaharaj: He gives the opportunity to jivas to get Him, to get His service. Jivas are more benefited than Krishna. Because of Krishna, jivas can come and jiva can taste the sweetness of Krishna-by getting service. Krishna is All-Existence, always nitya kishore, always young. Krishna is not old. And always beautiful. Here we will find, some ladies are very beautiful and after some time some disease comes, and she becomes so ugly: you do not find? But Krishna will not become ugly, always beautiful. In all relationships, He is Supreme. You can love Him, you will be very benefited.

But my question is if we will become Krishna, we will not be benefited.

Krishna is for Himself

Because Krishna has given us the scope, "You love Me. You have got the chance. I shall accept you as My servant, as My servitor-to serve Me. I am

giving you the opportunity, the greatest opportunity." But we are not taking that opportunity, we are running after this. We are getting afflictions. You start worshipping Krishna, see whether you are happy or not.
Sincerely you try. Take absolute shelter to him.

Eve of Janmastami - Sanctifying the Heart

Our Most Revered Gurudeva, Nityalila Pravishta Om Vishnupada Sri Srimad Bhakti Dayita Madhava Gosvami Maharaja, Founder/President of Sri Caitanya Gaudiya Math institution, established this Calcutta Math, and his objects of worship, Sri Sri Guru-Gauranga-Radha- Nayananatha Jiu, appeared here by dint of his devotion. He installed the Deities during the winter season. Thereafter, our Gurudeva introduced two five-day religious meetings in the Calcutta Math, to celebrate the occasions of the anniversary of the installation of the Deities and Sri Krishna Janmashtami, the advent anniversary of Sri Krishna. At that time, when he was living on this earth, we were under him directly, so we had no worries. Whatever he directed was directed by Supreme Lord Sri Krishna. Gurudeva is the absolute counterpart of the Supreme Lord, and we were not to be worried. But, after his disappearance, we could not see him physically although, indirectly, he was still directing everything. As God is eternal, His absolute counterpart is also eternal. As long as there is the sun, the light of the sun, the quality of the sun will also be there. If the sun is eternal, its light will also be eternal. Like that, the Supreme Lord is the Supreme Eternal Entity and, therefore, His absolute counterpart is also eternal. He is grace incarnate. He graces all the deserving enslaved jivas of this world.

By the grace of the Supreme Lord, we can see that His grace incarnate is the bona fide guru, His personal associate. Gurudeva, the grace incarnate of Supreme Lord Sri Krishna Gauraiga Mahaprabhu, appeared and put his holy footprints in our own place. I had no knowledge of Gaudiya Math, but he attracted me. He is the expansion of Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Caitanya Mahaprabhu sent His own personal associate here. Gurudeva also went to many different places and rescued many fallen souls. We have to remember Gurudeva. Without his grace, without submission to him, without sincere belief in him, we cannot have any kind of contact with Krishna.

Throughout the infinite planets, you will find all the pastimes of Sri

Krishna going on continuously, one after another. In this sense, His appearance pastime is eternal:

ei-mata brahmanda-madhye sabara
'parakasa' sapta-dvipe nava-khande
yaihara vilasa sarvatra prakasa tanra
—bhakte sukha dite jagatera adharma
nasi' dharma sthapite Caitanya
Caritamrita, Madhya-lila 20.218-219)

There are infinite brahmandas and infinite planets—so many that we cannot even conceive of them. Somewhere within these brahmandas, He is appearing continuously. So, in this sense, His appearance is eternal. But He also appears, reveals Himself, in the sanctified heart of the suddha bhakta. This is also His eternal appearance. We have to prepare ourselves so that Krishna will think us to be qualified to get Him. Then He will appear in our hearts. Today is the day before Janmashtami—"adhivasa". "Adhivasa" means that we have some prior duty to perform before His appearance, so that we will be ready for Him. We have to sanctify our hearts so that Krishna can appear there. Krishna is already there, but we are not aware of His presence.

ceto darpana marjanaa bhava-maha—davagni nirvapanam

sreyah-kairava-candrika-vitaranaa vidya-vadhu-
jivanam anandambudhi-vardhanaa prati-padaa
purnamritasvadanaa sarvatma-snapanaa paraa
vigayate sri-krishna-saikirtanam (Sikshashtaka 1)

Supreme Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu wrote this verse thereby instructing us how to attain the association of Krishna. How can Krishna appear in us? What do we have to do?

"Sri-krishna-sankirtanam": chant the Holy Names of Sri-Krishna. Then you

will get everything. "You do not need to do anything to purify your mind, except to go on chanting `Radha-Krishna', Hare Krishna mahamantra. Everything will come to you." We say this repeatedly with our words but, in practice, we have no belief.

The Supreme Lord will descend into our hearts—will be revealed in our hearts—when we actually and sincerely take absolute shelter at His lotus feet. He will reveal Himself to the surrendered soul. If we chant with bonafide submission, we will find that everything is there in the Holy Name—Form, Attributes, everything. The Name is saccidananda. Krishna is saccidananda. This realization will descend into our hearts. We might think that we will get Him by our own capacity, but He is not subservient to us. He is Self-effulgent, Self- luminous like the sun.

Svami Maharaja (Srila A.C. Bhaktivedanta Svami Maharaja) used to say, "If one is enlightened by that knowledge by which ignorance is destroyed, then that knowledge reveals everything, just as the sun illuminates everything at daybreak." When the sun rises, he shows himself and everything else in proper perspective. We think harinama to be material sound and that we can get Krishna by our own capacity. No! If we submit to God and His absolute counterpart, then all will be revealed.

We cannot bribe the Supreme Lord. Everything is within Him, there is nothing outside Him. Dhruva Maharaja received the grace of the Supreme Lord. We are uttering the Name and we are not getting this grace. Why? "He is not gracing us!" we complain. No, no. The sun is giving light to all. It is shining in the filthy place, the clean place—everywhere. Some are taking advantage of it, but the majority is not. Nonetheless, we complain, "The sun is not blessing us." Dhruva had firm belief. His faith was without a trace of doubt. "My mother told me that, by crying the Name of Sri Hari, I shall get Sri Hari." He was crying, crying, crying continuously. We are not doing this. He was continuously uttering the Holy Name, completely absorbed in Hari and, whatever he saw, whether a lion, crocodile or any other beast, he embraced. They did no harm to him as he was protected from all danger. However, we have difficulty believing this. Ultimately, he received the grace of Narada Gosvami.

That was an example from Srimad Bhagavatam but, in this Kali-yuga, when we were once in Punjab, a very astounding event took place. A devotee woman was traveling by rickshaw from her shop to a remote place, about two miles away. She was wearing many gold ornaments. She traveled for some

time along the well-populated road when suddenly the rickshaw driver turned away from the main road, toward a field. "Why are you going across this field?" the lady protested. "That is the way, over there."

"No," the rickshaw driver said, "I am taking a shortcut. We will go this way." He would not heed the woman's words.

Then, the woman became afraid, thinking, "I am wearing so many golden ornaments. The driver must be greedy for them. He will rob me and kill me." For this reason, she jumped from the rickshaw and started to run away, shouting, "Hah Govinda! Hah Govinda!" This is fact. We were there at the time.

To save herself, she jumped into a well. In terror, she remained in the well throughout the night, all the time uttering, "Hah Govinda!" At dawn, the next morning, many people from the village came for their morning walk. They heard the sound of a woman's voice uttering the Holy Name. "What is this?" they asked. They followed the voice to the well and found the woman who was crying, "Hah Govinda! Hah Govinda!" An extremely poisonous snake was swimming around her, circling her. "What is this?" they wondered. Then, they saw the rickshaw. A man holding a dagger lay next to it—dead. A great cry rose from the crowd and many people gathered from different places to see what had happened. By now, it was daylight and, as people came to the woman's aid, the snake left.

All the witnesses at the scene said they had never seen that snake before and, since that time, they have never seen it again. When the rickshaw driver went to kill the woman with his dagger, the snake bit him and injected him with venom, killing him instantly. After that, the same snake protected the woman throughout the night by circling her, so that no one could come near. The woman had firm belief. She did not utter any other name, only, "Govinda! Govinda! Govinda!" Even in this Kali-yuga, you can find such an event. Therefore, you should have belief.

Janmashtami and other auspicious functions at the Math are "hari-smarana-mahotsava" (grand celebrations dedicated to the remembrance of Hari). You will find, in a certain hymn, that the entire purpose of performing bhajana is to remember Krishna. We shall destroy all evil thoughts by remembering Krishna. We shall get everything by remembering. But, it is said in the

scripture called Vaishnava Cintamani, that it is not easy to remember, to meditate, with this material mind. It is very difficult. All the sins, vices and evil thoughts will be destroyed by remembrance of Krishna, but it is not so easy. But we can remember Krishna if we utilize our lips to utter His Name. By moving these lips, we can obtain eternal benefit, but, unfortunately, we have no aptitude for this. We cannot remember Krishna by means of the material mind.

When we are able to remember Krishna by loudly and continuously performing harinama, and that remembrance is revealed in our hearts, then we will be entitled to perform bhajana in a secluded place, but not now. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu is teaching us. Our Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura is teaching us. If our Gurudeva ever saw some devotees dancing and chanting the Holy Name, he would show them great respect. "They are expressing their hearts! Hari bol!" In order to gain some respect, name and fame, I was also dancing. "Ah! Very good!" Gurudeva would say. He would be pleased with me, although I was doing it to receive praise. Inside, I had no feeling, no want for Krishna, and no perturbation of heart. I did it only to get respect from others. Nonetheless, Gurudeva was so satisfied. Why? This you have to understand. "Kirtana prabhave smarana haibe" (Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Sarasvati Thakura). Remembrance of Bhagavan comes from constant chanting of the Holy Name.

Prahalada told all the demon boys, "Why are you afraid? There is no difficulty in worshipping Krishna. You should just utter the Name. You are calling your father and your mother without difficulty. Call Him and He will be satisfied. There is no difficulty. He is within you. He has affection for you. You will find the affection of crores of mothers in Sri Hari." Here in this world, one always encounters difficulty when trying to please another person, but Krishna is not at all difficult to please. With a sincere heart, utter His Name.

In your household life, you wile away the time for nothing, for worldly things. If you are also gossiping about these things here in the temple, then why have you come? The temple is for the worship of Krishna, nothing else. You should think about this. Why have you come here? Have you spent so much money to come here only to gossip about worldly things?

What is bhagavan-bhajana?

sravanam kirtanam dhyanam harer adbhuta-
karmanah janma-karma-gunanam ca tad-
arthe 'khila-ceshtitam (Srimad Bhagavatam,
11.3.27)

Once, our Guru Maharaja was in Vraja-mandala performing parikrama. Generally, our Guru Maharaja would remain in front to perform kirtana, guiding the other devotees. On this particular occasion, Guru Maharaja was held up with work at some place and would not be able to come until later. At the front of the procession, all the Vaishnavas were chanting the Holy Name and the others were answering him back. But, at the back of the procession, there were so many devotees who were idly gossiping about worldly things. They did not know that Guru Maharaja was coming up from the rear. When Guru Maharaja came up to them, he said, "Oh! Your whole life's fortune has been destroyed! At this great procession you are also gossiping about worldly things? Then they quickly started chanting, "Radhe Govinda! Radhe Govinda!" What is the reason why we have spent so much money to come and be here? Is it to give our energy to worldly things? If we hear about Krishna, we shall go to Krishna. If we hear about worldly things, we shall go to worldly things. If we sing about Krishna, we shall go to Krishna. If we speak about Krishna, we shall go to Krishna. If we remember Krishna, our minds will go there. If we devote all our sense organs for the service of Sri Krishna, we shall go to Him. This is called bhajana. If we go on expending all our energy for worldly things, while remaining externally in the Math, what benefit will we receive?

Tomorrow, Krishna will appear. He will appear in the shrine of our hearts. He is there within us and He will appear there. So, today, on this adhivasa tithi, we have to clear the heart and mind so that Krishna will come and sit there. Krishna does not take His seat in an impure, dirty place. Krishna is the Holiest. We have to prepare our hearts, purify our hearts. There should be no desire other than the service of Sri Krishna. If there should be any other desire, then that heart is impure. As long as impure thoughts are there, Krishna will not

appear.

In Purushottama-dhama (Puri), during the time of the car festival (Ratha-yatra), Lord Jagannatha travels from His temple in Puri to the Gundica Temple, a distance of about two miles. Caitanya Mahaprabhu explains that the Gundica Temple is Vrindavana and the Jagannatha Temple is Kurukshetra. During a solar eclipse, people go to Kurukshetra to bathe and perform other rituals. In the scriptures, you will find descriptions of the immense glories of this practice. During the time of Krishna's pastimes on Earth, there was a solar eclipse where Krishna came from Dvaraka to Kurukshetra with all His personal associates. At that time, Krishna was the King, Emperor and Sole Proprietor of Dvaraka. All His subjects, consorts and personal associates were very eager to go to Kurukshetra during the solar eclipse so they could bathe, perform sandhya and other rituals. If they could perform these sacrifices with the brahmanas, they could get immense fruits. To fulfill this desire of His subjects, Krishna said, "All right, we shall go." So, all the numerous subjects, consorts and personal associates came to Kurukshetra. Krishna intentionally invited everyone except the Vrajavasis—the devotees of Vraja. Narada Gosvami was very shocked by this. He approached Krishna, saying, "The Vrajavasis love You so much. They are experiencing extreme separation grief by not seeing You. You are inviting everyone in the whole world but You are not inviting the Vrajavasis? What offense are they guilty of? Have they committed an offense by loving You? I cannot tolerate this!"

Then Krishna said, "They are our own people. No one has to send invitations to one's own. Parents do not invite their children, and vice versa. They are our own. Outside people are invited. How can I invite the Vrajavasis? You are right, I intentionally did not invite them because they are saturated with love for Me. They have no interest in performing sacrifices to obtain mundane benefits. If they come, the results of all these ritual practices will be destroyed. For this reason, I have not invited them."

Although not invited, the Vrajavasis came to learn that Krishna was coming to Kurukshetra. The Vrajavasis thought, "Kurukshetra is much closer to Vraja-mandala than Dvaraka is. We should avail ourselves of this rare opportunity to see Krishna! We can have darsana of Krishna! We should not miss this chance!"

But they could not venture to go there. Why? They thought, "Krishna has become the Emperor. His standard is very high, and we are merely cowherd men and women. We are poor people. Perhaps Krishna has forgotten us. If we go there, He will not recognize us. Someone of such a high position will not come to see ordinary people like us. Previously He was a cowherd boy in our Vraja-dhama, but now He has become King. But we are extremely grief-stricken. We cannot tolerate this separation."

Thinking like this, the Vrajavasis reasoned, "A man might forget everything else, but he will never forget his parents, even if they live far away. If Nanda Maharaja and Yasoda go there, then Krishna will bow down to them and make obeisances." So they went to Nanda Maharaja, saying, "Krishna is coming to Kurukshetra! We are too grief-stricken with separation grief. We have not seen Him for such a long time, but we do not have the courage to go there. We do not know if Krishna will give us the opportunity to see Him, as His present standard of living is so high. But, if His parents go there, then Krishna will come to them as their son and offer obeisances."

Then Nanda Maharaja and Yasoda said, "No, no. This is not correct. He has not come here for such a long time! He has so many consorts and servants serving Him there. He is so wealthy now. His wives are also wealthy. We are only cowherd men and women. We have nothing. After so long, how can we go? If we go there, will He come to see us? If we go to Kurukshetra and are deprived of seeing Krishna, we shall die!"

When Krishna, the Emperor of Dvaraka, entered Kurukshetra, so many cavalry units, elephants, horses, etc. accompanied Him. Only those who had permission were allowed to go to speak with Him. He was surrounded by servants. There were four gatekeepers, one in each direction. The King's parents, Vasudeva and Devaki were also there. The brahmanas had gone to start the sacrifices. So, no one was permitted to disturb the King.

Nanda Maharaja, Yasoda Devi and all the cowherd boys and other friends of Krishna approached where He was. Nobody acknowledged them. Armed forces, cavalry and elephants surrounded Krishna.

Nanda Maharaja approached one of the guards. "I have come to see my beloved son," he said.

"Who is your beloved son?" a guard asked him. "Krishna."

"How is that? You are a poor person. He is the King! His parents are already here— Vasudeva and Devaki. We do not believe you! From

where have you come? Why are you claiming that He is your son? We do not believe you!"

Nanda Maharaja cried, "I shall die!"

The guard said, "I am doing my work as per the order of the King. If I do anything against His orders, I shall be dismissed. Do you have a permit?"

"No."

"Then I cannot let you in," the guard replied.

Then all the cowherd boys, carrying their small cow prods, cried, "My friend! My bosom friend! Kanhaiya!"

"What? He is the King! His friends are like this? You are paupers! I do not believe you!" Then the gopis cried, "We are the consorts of Krishna!" "What? The consorts are already here. Satyabhama, Rukmini and all the other queens are here! From where have you come? Show me some permit from the King or His Prime Minister!"

Then, Yasoda Devi said, "I told you that, if I go to Kurukshetra and I am deprived of seeing Krishna, I shall die! I have nothing left.

My life is finished!" She cried loudly, "Gopala!" and fell unconscious. At that time, Krishna was with the brahmanas, who requested Him to start the sacrifice. Krishna removed all His royal garments and became a small, naked boy, crying, "Mother! O Mommy! Mommy! Mommy!" He cried and cried and cried and ran to sit on the lap of Yasoda Devi. Now, without Krishna's presence, all the ritual sacrifices were destroyed. By hearing one single call from Yasoda Devi, Krishna could not remain there.

Then Krishna met the gopis and the others. The gopis attracted Krishna. They said, "We are not very happy seeing You here. There are so many cavalrymen, elephants and chariots—we should go to Vrindavana. There, it is sweet. All this is Your majestic aspect.

So, please allow us the opportunity to see You in better circumstances by coming with us to Vrindavana. Please do not remain here! "He Gopinatha! He Gopinatha! Vrindavane calo! He Gopinatha!"

In that mood of the gopis, saturated with gopi-bhava, Caitanya Mahaprabhu

pulled the chariot from the Jagannatha Temple (Kurukshetra) toward Gundica (Vrindavana). During the chariot festival, Krishna, Baladeva and Subhadra make the trip in three chariots. The day before the festival, Caitanya Mahaprabhu told the devotees, "You see, Krishna will come to the Gundica Temple tomorrow. You must come with Me and cleanse the temple." "Cleansing the temple" means that you must remove all the thorns and rubbish outside and trim the grass. You must clear the path of any stones and sweep away all the dust with a broom. But it also means that you are to engage your sense organs for the service of Krishna. If you do not engage your sense organs for Him, you will not get Him. For this reason, you have to clear your heart of all desire for the attainment of material benefits, both here and in the hereafter, in heaven. If such desire is there, Krishna will not come. The desire for non-eternal benefits and emancipation, the desire to merge yourself in formless Brahman, the desire to merge yourself in Paramatma, these sorts of desires will deter you from going to Krishna. Krishna will not come to you. For this reason, you have to clear all of this away — these desires are like hard stones.

Outside, you clear them away with brooms, and all the devotees bring earthen pots full of water to wash everything. After this, there should be no desire for name and fame and other such things. All of this should be totally removed. For this reason, Caitanya Mahaprabhu, with the help of His own uttri (the cloth that a sannyasi wears around his neck), scrubbed the inside of the temple. There should not be any kind of material desires within the heart, not even those hidden secretly. Then Krishna will come tomorrow.

Krishna is coming here from the Jagannatha Temple, and you have to clear these unwanted things away. This means that you have to clear your mind. There should be no other desire

except desire for Krishna. Krishna is coming to Vrindavana. Krishna is the only Autocrat there. No other ideas, forces or persons should dominate your heart, except Krishna. So, you have to make your heart the same as Vrindavana, where Krishna is solely dominant. He is the Sole Proprietor.

Caitanya Mahaprabhu says, "I have made this mind Vrindavana, so that Krishna will be free —free to perform all His pastimes and sporting activities." You have to make

your mind Vrindavana. No one else should be allowed to enter, and no other thoughts should be allowed. Now you are staying in a room and outside you have placed a big sign that says, "Welcome." So, others see the sign and say, "Oh, welcome," and they come to your door. But the door is closed and, behind the door, there are many chairs, tables etc. In fact, the room is completely filled with furniture! They cannot even open the door. So, they go away, disappointed. Outside, your sign says, "Welcome," and you are thinking that you are welcoming Krishna. But, when Krishna comes, you have thoughts in your mind of wife, children, house, money, name, fame and other things. All these things have filled up your heart. Krishna will come and then go back. You have to clear your mind, your heart, for Him. Clear away all attachment to non-eternal things. Then Krishna will come tomorrow.

We have to perform harinama. This is the best method. So, in these days leading up to the advent of Sri Krishna, we should perform harinama saikirtana. We should not do this to show off to others. We have to do our own bhajana. We must call and call Krishna from the core of the heart. The days should be spent performing sankirtana. Then our minds will be cleansed and Krishna may appear. If you want Krishna, you have to remove all things that are not Krishna. This is "adhivasa".

Caitanya Mahaprabhu has taught us that you will get everything, all kinds of attainments, by means of the Holy Name. He made all the devotees chant the Holy Name, being careful to avoid the tenfold offenses. You are not to engage in meditation or any other kind of practice. Your mind will be cleansed. All the unwanted desires will be removed: "ceto darpana marjanam". You have multifarious desires but, if you perform sankirtana, the first attainment is that your desires will be removed. When these desires are gone, so too will be the pangs of threefold suffering—miseries. The desires are the miseries. As long as you have desires, should there be some hindrance to the fulfillment of these desires, your mind will become upset. For this reason, when the desires are removed, there will be no afflictions and Krishna will appear. Krishna is All-Good. After that, you will have a relationship with Krishna, thinking, "I am of Krishna." With love, you will utter the Holy Name and you will be drowned in the ocean of ambrosia—bliss—and, at every step, you will have the taste of that sweet transcendental ambrosia of the Supreme Lord.

Eve of Janmastami - Sanctifying the Heart 2

The following is an excerpt from the chapter "Sanctifying the Heart" in the book "A Taste of Transcendence" by Srila Bhakti Ballabh Tirtha Maharaj. In this chapter, Maharaj discusses the inner meaning of Krishna's divine pastimes during both Ratha Yatra festival and Janmastami. For more information about this book, click here. (This lecture was originally delivered at the Calcutta branch of Sri Chaitanya Gaudiya Math, the day before Janmastami in the year 2000).

Tomorrow, Krsna will appear. He will appear in the shrine of our hearts. He is there within us and He will appear there. So, today, on this adhivasa tithi, we have to clear the heart and mind so that Krsna will come and sit there. Krsna does not take His seat in an impure, dirty place. Krsna is the Holiest. We have to prepare our hearts, purify our hearts. There should be no desire other than the service of Sri Krsna. If there should be any other desire, then that heart is impure. As long as impure thoughts are there, Krsna will not appear.

In Purusottama-dhama (Puri), during the time of the car festival (Ratha-yatra), Lord Jagannatha travels from His temple in Puri to the Gundica Temple, a distance of about two miles. Caitanya Mahaprabhu explains that the Gundica Temple is Vrndavana and the Jagannatha Temple is Kuruksetra. During a solar eclipse, people go to Kuruksetra to bathe and perform other rituals. In the scriptures, you will find descriptions of the immense glories of this practice. During the time of Krsna's pastimes on Earth, there was a solar eclipse where Krsna came from Dvaraka to Kuruksetra with all His personal associates. At that time, Krsna was the King, Emperor and Sole Proprietor of Dvaraka. All His subjects, consorts and personal associates were very eager to go to Kuruksetra during the solar eclipse so they could bathe, perform sandhya and other rituals. If they could perform these sacrifices with the brahmanas, they could get immense fruits. To fulfill this desire of His subjects, Krsna said, "All right, we shall go." So, all the numerous subjects, consorts and personal associates came to Kuruksetra. Krsna intentionally invited everyone except the Vrajavasis-the devotees of Vraja.

Narada Gosvami was very shocked by this. He approached Krsna, saying, "The Vrajavasis love You so much. They are experiencing extreme separation

grief by not seeing You. You are inviting everyone in the whole world but You are not inviting the Vrajavasis? What offense are they guilty of? Have they committed an offense by loving You? I cannot tolerate this!"

Then Krsna said, "They are our own people. No one has to send invitations to one's own. Parents do not invite their children, and vice versa. They are our own. Outside people are invited. How can I invite the Vrajavasis? You are right, I intentionally did not invite them because they are saturated with love for Me. They have no interest in performing sacrifices to obtain mundane benefits. If they come, the results of all these ritual practices will be destroyed. For this reason, I have not invited them."

Although not invited, the Vrajavasis came to learn that Krsna was coming to Kuruksetra. The Vrajavasis thought, "Kuruksetra is much closer to Vraja-mandala than Dvaraka is. We should avail ourselves of this rare opportunity to see Krsna! We can have darsana of Krsna! We should not miss this chance!"

But they could not venture to go there. Why? They thought, "Krsna has become the Emperor. His standard is very high, and we are merely cowherd men and women. We are poor people. Perhaps Krsna has forgotten us. If we go there, He will not recognize us. Someone of such a high position will not come to see ordinary people like us. Previously He was a cowherd boy in our Vraja-dhama, but now He has become King. But we are extremely grief-stricken. We cannot tolerate this separation."

Thinking like this, the Vrajavasis reasoned, "A man might forget everything else, but he will never forget his parents, even if they live far away. If Nanda Maharaja and Yasoda go there, then Krsna will bow down to them and make obeisances." So they went to Nanda Maharaja, saying, "Krsna is coming to Kuruksetra! We are too grief-stricken with separation grief. We have not seen Him for such a long time, but we do not have the courage to go there. We do not know if Krsna will give us the opportunity to see Him, as His present standard of living is so high. But, if His parents go there, then Krsna will come to them as their son and offer obeisances."

Then Nanda Maharaja and Yasoda said, "No, no. This is not correct. He has not come here for such a long time! He has so many consorts and servants serving Him there. He is so wealthy now. His wives are also wealthy. We are

only cowherd men and women. We have nothing. After so long, how can we go? If we go there, will He come to see us? If we go to Kuruksetra and are deprived of seeing Krsna, we shall die!"

When Krsna, the Emperor of Dvaraka, entered Kuruksetra, so many cavalry units, elephants, horses, etc. accompanied Him. Only those who had permission were allowed to go to speak with Him. He was surrounded by servants. There were four gatekeepers, one in each direction. The King's parents, Vasudeva and Devaki were also there. The brahmanas had gone to start the sacrifices. So, no one was permitted to disturb the King.

Nanda Maharaja, Yasoda Devi and all the cowherd boys and other friends of Krsna approached where He was. Nobody acknowledged them. Armed forces, cavalry and elephants surrounded Krsna.

Nanda Maharaja approached one of the guards. "I have come to see my beloved son," he said.

"Who is your beloved son?" a guard asked him. "Krsna."
"How is that? You are a poor person. He is the King! His parents are already here-Vasudeva and Devaki. We do not believe you! From where have you come? Why are you claiming that He is your son? We do not believe you!"

Nanda Maharaja cried, "I shall die!"

The guard said, "I am doing my work as per the order of the King. If I do anything against His orders, I shall be dismissed. Do you have a permit?"

"No."

"Then I cannot let you in," the guard replied.

Then all the cowherd boys, carrying their small cow prods, cried, "My friend! My bosom friend! Kanhaiya!"

"What? He is the King! His friends are like this? You are paupers! I do not believe you!" Then the gopis cried, "We are the consorts of Krsna!"
"What? The consorts are already here. Satyabhama, Rukmini and all the other queens are here! From where have you come? Show me some permit from the King or His Prime Minister!"

Then, Yasoda Devi said, "I told you that, if I go to Kuruksetra and I am deprived of seeing Krsna, I shall die! I have nothing left. My life is finished!" She cried loudly, "Gopala!" and fell unconscious.

At that time, Krsna was with the brahmanas, who requested Him to start the sacrifice. Krsna removed all His royal garments and became a small, naked boy, crying, "Mother! O Mommy! Mommy! Mommy!" He cried and cried and cried and ran to sit on the lap of Yasoda Devi. Now, without Krsna's presence, all the ritual sacrifices were destroyed. By hearing one single call from Yasoda Devi, Krsna could not remain there.

Then Krsna met the gopis and the others. The gopis attracted Krsna. They said, "We are not very happy seeing You here. There are so many cavalrymen, elephants and chariots-we should go to Vrndavana. There, it is sweet. All this is Your majestic aspect. So, please allow us the opportunity to see You in better circumstances by coming with us to Vrndavana.
Please do not remain here! "He Gopinatha! He Gopinatha! Vrndavane calo! He Gopinatha!"

In that mood of the gopis, saturated with gopi-bhava, Caitanya Mahaprabhu pulled the chariot from the Jagannatha Temple (Kuruksetra) toward Gundica (Vrndavana). During the chariot festival, Krsna, Baladeva and Subhadra make the trip in three chariots.

The day before the festival, Caitanya Mahaprabhu told the devotees, "You see, Krsna will come to the Gundica Temple tomorrow. You must come with Me and cleanse the temple." "Cleansing the temple" means that you must remove all the thorns and rubbish outside and trim the grass. You must clear the path of any stones and sweep away all the dust with a broom. But it also means that you are to engage your sense organs for the service of Krsna. If you do not engage your sense organs for Him, you will not get Him. For this reason, you have to clear your heart of all desire for the attainment of material benefits, both here and in the hereafter, in heaven. If such desire is there, Krsna will not come. The desire for non- eternal benefits and emancipation, the desire to merge yourself in formless Brahman, the desire to merge yourself in Paramatma, these sorts of desires will deter you from going to Krsna. Krsna will not come to you. For this reason, you have to clear all of this away-these desires are like hard stones. Outside, you clear them away with brooms, and all the devotees bring earthen pots full of water to wash everything. After this, there should be no desire for name and fame and other such things. All of this should be totally removed. For this reason, Caitanya Mahaprabhu, with the help of His own uttri (the cloth that a sannyasi wears around his neck), scrubbed the inside of the temple. There should not be any kind of material desires within the heart, not even those hidden secretly. Then Krsna will come

tomorrow.

Krsna is coming here from the Jagannatha Temple, and you have to clear these unwanted things away. This means that you have to clear your mind. There should be no other desire except desire for Krsna. Krsna is coming to Vrndavana. Krsna is the only Autocrat there. No other ideas, forces or persons should dominate your heart, except Krsna. So, you have to make your heart the same as Vrndavana, where Krsna is solely dominant. He is the Sole Proprietor. Caitanya Mahaprabhu says, "I have made this mind Vrndavana, so that Krsna will be free-free to perform all His pastimes and sporting activities." You have to make your mind Vrndavana. No one else should be allowed to enter, and no other thoughts should be allowed.

The Glories of His Divine Grace Srila A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaj

Location: Boston Common, Boston,
Massachusetts, USA Date: 23 August 2002
Time: 12:30 PM

Why has Sanjaya das Prabhu suddenly brought us to this place? Is there anything that can occur spontaneously or are events such as this preordained? Our Most Revered Parampujyapada Parivajakacharya Srila A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaj came to this place and started kirtan. In his remembrance, we are performing kirtan here, so that he will be satisfied. The ultimate goal should be the satisfaction of Sri Krishna. Krishna bestowed so much grace upon Srila Swami Maharaj. Our Paramgurudeva Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur, the Absolute Counterpart of the Supreme Lord, was the founder of Sri Gaudiya Math and Sri Chaitanya Math. It was he, who, as the spiritual master of Paramapujyapad Srila A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaj, imparted to him the power to preach all over the world.

Srila Swami Maharaj started on his life's mission by praying for the grace of Supreme Lord Sri Krishna and His personal associates. We have heard that he

came alone, with no assistance from others. His Gurudeva had given him the order to spread the all-embracing, all-accommodating divine knowledge and love of God throughout the world. He travelled from India with great difficulty and eventually disembarked in Boston. I have heard that he came by ship and that this was the first place he came to in the USA. Today is the day when Swami Maharaj left India for the USA. This is a very important day!

I have a connection with him. We may say that this is accidental but actually everything is preordained. Nothing occurs by chance. When I was in Vrindavan at Sri Chaitanya Gaudiya Math with my revered Gurudeva Parampujyapada Srila Bhakti Dayita Madhava Goswami Maharaj, we heard that a godbrother of our Gurudeva, Parampujyapada Srila A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaj, was staying at the Sri Sri Radha-Damodar temple. As he was a godbrother of our Gurudeva and a disciple of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur, he was naturally the object of great regard and reverence. Thinking, "I shall go there and pay my obeisances to him," I made my way to the Sri Sri Radha-Damodar temple. Upon meeting him, I offered my humble obeisances and he then began to speak.

Showing me his writings, he said, "I want to publish a monthly magazine, Back to Godhead. Please go through my writings." The printing, by Vrindavan Press, was very indistinct.

Because it was his order, I tried to go through it. When I had gone through the text he had given me, he said, "I have written other articles. You should also go through those." He did not mention at that time that he had the desire to go to foreign countries to preach. The only thing that he said was that I should go through his writings. After that I prayed out loud to him, "Will you not come to our Math? Our Gurudeva is there. Please come and see him." He immediately agreed, saying, "Yes, I will come tomorrow to see your Gurudeva."

The very next day he came to our Math and entered the room of our Gurumaharaj. I remained outside during the discussion of these two godbrothers. Only Swami Maharaj and our Gurudeva were there. Neither I nor anyone else knows what subject they might have been discussing. Swami Maharaj came out of the room after about half an hour or so to go back to his temple. At the gate of our Math, he suddenly called me and said, "You see, I have the desire to go outside India to spread the message of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Will you accompany me? Will you go with me?" Because at that time I was the Secretary of Sri Chaitanya Gaudiya Math institution and had been given enormous responsibilities by our Gurudeva, I remained silent.

Swami Maharaj is guru---shiksha guru---and our guru is also guru---diksha guru---what could I say? Therefore, I remained silent. Finally I said that I was the Secretary of that institution and that Gurudeva had given me many responsibilities. With urgent work to do, how could I leave at that time? He was disappointed as he could not find anyone to assist him.

Ultimately, he came to the west alone. He came to this place first. He traveled by ship, not by air, and he disembarked here. He performed kirtan here by the grace of the Supreme Lord. The Supreme Lord can do anything. Nothing is impossible for him. If we have straight-forwardness and sincerity of heart then the Supreme Lord will fulfill our desires. We should perform kirtan with straight-forwardness of heart and sincere belief. Srila Swami Maharaj performed kirtan alone here. Do you think that it is possible to do this alone---to propagate the message of divine love alone throughout the world? How is such a thing possible? It is possible only by God's grace! We should think about this! We should not worry whether or not many persons are coming to assist.

When our Paramgurudeva Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur wanted to take initiation from Srila Gaura Kishore das Babaji Maharaj, Babaji Maharaj said, "I have made up my mind. I shall not take on any disciples. If I accept you as my disciple then I shall have to give consideration to you. This will distract me from my worship. I cannot assume the responsibility." Our revered Paramgurudeva would come and pray for the grace of Babaji Maharaj repeatedly but was refused every time. Acting as though he were a person exhibiting a sort of mundane vanity or pride, Srila Gaura Kishore das Babaji Maharaj would tell Paramgurudeva that there are many gurus, so why bother to make repeated supplications to him? He should go to some other person. However, our Paramgurudeva remained firm in his resolve. Repeatedly he would come, about fourteen times in all. Finally, Babaji Maharaj said to him, "I will ask Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. If he so orders, then I shall give you mantra."

After some days had passed, our Paramgurudeva again prayed, "Will you please ask Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu on my behalf?" Gaur Kishore das Babaji Maharaj replied, "Oh, I have forgotten about it." When we become bewildered we lose our faith and cannot progress, but our Paramgurudeva remained undeterred. Feeling disappointed, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur left. After some time, he again returned. He was always praying to the Supreme Lord, "Please kindly fulfill my desire!" Our Paramgurudeva asked Babaji Maharaj, "Did you ask Sri Chaitanyadeva?"

Babaji Maharaj replied, "Yes, I did ask." Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur then said, "What did He say?" Gaura Kishore das Babaji Maharaj said, "Mahaprabhu says that you have mundane vanity and pride. He says that you should not be given mantra." Then our Paramgurudeva became very disappointed. He remained there, praying to Lord Chaitanya, "Please give me Your order." At that time, Gaura Kishore das Babaji Maharaj was sitting on a broken boat on the bank of the confluence of the Ganges and Saraswati rivers. He was always performing harinama. If someone rich, such as an influential zamindar (land owner), came to touch his holy feet, he would immediately curse them that all their wealth and possessions would be destroyed. They were afraid of him and paid their obeisances from a distance. Nobody had the courage to touch him. But then, Babaji Maharaj, after so many times refusing to give mantra, all of a sudden took the dust from his own lotus feet and besmeared it on Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur telling him, "You are the only person capable of spreading the message of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, therefore I am blessing you and giving you mantra." He imparted all his power to only one disciple!

Having received the orders of his Gurudeva, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur then performed six years of penance. He chanted Supreme Lord Hari's Holy Name one billion times. Such great austerities! After this, he thought, "I have no personal qualities. How will I be able to fulfill the desire of Gurudeva?" He felt very discouraged, always praying for the grace of Gurudeva. Paramgurudeva's father, Srila Bhaktivinode Thakur, was also his Gurudeva. He had a vision of Bhaktivinode Thakur, Gaura Kishore das Babaji Maharaj, Jagannatha das Babaji Maharaj and the Panchatattva (Sri Krishnachaitanya in five features or aspects). They told him not to be afraid and that many people would soon come to follow him. "Preach the message of divine love of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu! Start!" Taking this to heart, he went to Ultadanga Road in Calcutta and started Sri Gaudiya Math. Srila Gaura Kishore das Babaji Maharaj, with only one disciple, started the whole movement. Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur also imparted that powers to others. Wherever they went, they were not afraid of anything. They met with many high government officials. They had no fear and went everywhere because they had the power of their Gurudeva behind them. Srila Bon Maharaj also went to London following the orders of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur. They were preaching in this way.

Ultimately, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur wrote a letter

with specific instructions to Paramapujyapad Swami Maharaj who was a householder at that time.

When I visited New York in 1997, Vaikunthanath das Prabhu, a disciple of Swami Maharaj, met me and was very enthusiastic to take me to different places where I met many devotees. I went to different ISKCON temples and was eventually taken to Tompkins Square Park by Vaikunthanath Prabhu and one of Swami Maharaj's dedicated sannyasi disciples [click here for an account of that event]. At that time, Sriman Vaikunthanath Prabhu asked me to listen to a taped lecture of Srila Swami Maharaj. I told him that I would hear it as soon as the opportunity arose. I eventually heard it during a two-hour car journey to Hartford, Connecticut. In that recording, Swami Maharaj was relating his life story including the disappearance of our Paramgurudeva Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur.

Swami Maharaj said, "I did not have enough money to maintain my family. I could not get money or earn anything in Calcutta, so I went to Bombay (Mumbai) but was not successful. In the meantime, I heard that our Gurudeva was in Puri. He was not feeling well. He might leave the planet at any moment. Hearing this, I was disturbed. At present I am in my house, thinking how to maintain my family. On the other hand, my godbrothers are with Srila Gurudeva. They are serving. My life is futile. Thinking like this, I then wrote a letter to Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur, saying, 'Kindly instruct me. I am your unfortunate disciple. I could not serve in the way that all of you are serving. Please give some orders to me.' Srila Gurudeva received the letter and then replied saying that I had a good hold over English. He said that it was his desire that I spread the message of divine love of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu to all the corners of the world. I thought, 'All right, I shall try.' At that time I was thinking that I should keep some money for the welfare of my family although I was trying to fulfill my Gurudeva's order. Then I got the news that Gurudeva had passed away. I thought, 'I am wasting time in householder life, attached to worldly relations. By doing this I shall not be able to fulfill the desire of Gurudeva.' Immediately after that I renounced family life."

Swami Maharaj stayed first for several years at the Sri Sri Radha-Damodar temple. I met him at that time. With great risk of life, he always prayed for the blessings of his Gurudeva and performed the kirtans of Srila Narottama das Thakur and Srila Bhaktivinode Thakur.

Nobody in the west understood them. But he prayed nonetheless. In this way all the people of the western world got into the habit of singing songs

written by great devotee sages.
Wherever I go, I now hear those songs. Srila Swami Maharaj himself used to sing and would also translate and publish great Vaishnava literatures.

This is the first time that I have come to Boston. Our Paramapujyapad Srila Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaj came here by ship earlier where he started the spread of the message of all- embracing, all-accommodating divine love of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu in the west.

I am only here for four days. I am staying at Sanjaya das Prabhu's house. He has brought us here. This place is holy for us. Take the dust. [Srila Bhakti Ballabh Tirtha Maharaj takes the dust from the park and puts it on his head.]

Srila A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaj wanted me with him, but I could not come. I committed an offense at his lotus feet. Everything is preordained by the Supreme Lord.

Gaura Premanande! Hari Hari bol!

Questions and Answers

Devotee: One thing I am kind of wondering is, that, among the many different groups of Vaishnavas, there is sometimes some conception everyone seems to agree with. When we perfect the path of devotion and go to the spiritual world, we have an eternal relationship with Krishna. That relationship is spiritual, so it is dynamic and changing but in another sense it is eternal and is unchanging. My question is this: when we go to the spiritual world where our relationship with Krishna and His devotees is eternal and unchanging, is there anything that we may do here in this material realm that will alter our relationship with Krishna? I shall give an example. If I become a big guru with many disciples and then go back to the spiritual world to have a relationship with my guru and Krishna, will I be able to do more service? Could it be a material thought that I will be able to do better quality, more wonderful service in this way?

HDG Srila B. B. Tirtha Maharaj: I have heard from my Gurudeva, Srila Bhakti Dayita Madhava Goswami Maharaj, the elder godbrother of Srila Swami Maharaj, that the guru never thinks of himself as guru. But an outside

person may think that this person is acting as guru by giving mantra and that another person is acting as a disciple by the taking of mantra. But the guru always thinks that he is the eternal servant of Supreme Lord Sri Krishna. He will be satisfied if the conditioned souls, who are averse to the Supreme Lord and have forgotten their relationship with Him, are able to understand Him. If he can enable them to understand their real nature and bring them under the shelter of the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord, then the Supreme Lord will be happy. For that reason, the guru tries to explain to them that they are not of this world, that they are connected to the Supreme Lord and that they are His eternal servants---the outcome of His marginal potency. All potencies should remain for the possessor of the potency. My potency works for me and the Supreme Lord's potency works for Him. Only that should be awakened.

For example, there is a magnet and there is iron. The magnet has the power to attract iron. When iron comes near the magnet, it becomes attracted. If both a magnet and iron are there but there is no attraction, then something must be wrong. Krishna is there and He is attracting all. By attracting all, He pleases all. He is called Krishna because 'krish' means "to attract" and 'na' means "to give happiness." By attracting He is giving anand---bliss. He attracts everyone. Nandanandana Krishna possesses all kinds of qualities, all kinds of sweetness and all kinds of delightfulness, but He is not attracting me---I am not feeling anything! What is the defect? The magnet and the iron are both there. If the iron is not running toward the magnet then the iron must have some sort of defect. There is a coating of rust on the iron, and if I remove the rust, then the natural function will become manifested. Then the iron will run to the magnet. The magnet will attract it. In this way, when we become averse to the Supreme Lord, we become covered by the illusory energy (maya) in the form of three primeval qualities, namely sattva, rajas and tamas. By rajo-guna we are born, we remain in this world by means of sattva-guna and by tamo-guna, we die. We are then compelled to take birth in different species and again we die. By great fortune we have achieved this human birth. Only in the human birth has God given us the discriminative power: "You should think whether you want to enjoy this world or if you would rather come to Me." Give up the desire to enjoy and dominate the material world. You should not just engage in eating, mating, sleeping and defending. All the animals are doing the same thing. You have been given this special potency that you must utilize to accept the eternal and reject the non-eternal.

When, by our previous good impressions (sukriti), we knowingly or unknowingly serve Krishna, we create an impact on our real self. When we

do something good in this world we get physical and mental benefit, but that is only temporary. The body is not eternal so the benefit is also not eternal. Our real self is eternal and is eternally connected to the Supreme by means of association with a suddha-bhakta---a pure devotee.

There are many different forms of the Supreme Lord such as Lakshmi-Narayana, Sita- Rama, Dwarakadisha Krishna, Mathuradhisha Krishna and Nandanandana Krishna. All these are different forms. There is Half-man/Half-lion Bhagavan (Narasimha), Fish Bhagavan (Matsya), Boar Bhagavan (Varaha) and so many more. Now, if you receive the grace of the preceptorial channel for Boar Bhagavan, then that mantra will take you to the abode of Boar Bhagavan and, similarly, if you take mantra from a pure devotee of Narasimha Bhagavan, then that mantra will take you to Lord Narasimha's abode. If you take mantra from a devotee of Dwaraka Krishna, then it will take you to Dwaraka. If you take mantra from Nandanandana Krishna's devotee, then you can go to His abode. You have to go through the bhagavata-marg (the devotional path) and when you want to stop somewhere, you must not---you must go on. You have taken Krishna mantra from a personal associate of Nandanandana Krishna and you are not to stop---you must continue relentlessly. Then you will cross, cross, cross and, ultimately, at the culmination, you will reach the lotus feet of Supreme Lord Sri Krishna. At Prayag, Sriman Mahaprabhu imparted this knowledge, which is the culmination of bhakti-rasa, to Srila Rupa Goswami. "How to obtain krishna-prema" is the subject of the 19th chapter of Madhya-lila of Sri Chaitanya Charitamrita.
Have you gone through this?

Without performing any service to Krishna and the krishna-bhakta, you cannot have the desire to understand the Absolute. "Athato brahma-jijnasa": "Now is the time to inquire about the Absolute Truth." Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu has taught us the proper mode of inquiry through Srila Sanatana Goswami. When the time of deliverance from maya arrives, then we will put relevant questions to a realized soul---a sadguru (a bonafide preceptor).
Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu appeared in the mood of a devotee. In the form of Radharani, the Highest Guru, Nandanandana Krishna Himself appeared. Sanatana Goswami asked Him questions such as, "Who and what am I? Why am I burning from the three-fold afflictions [miseries caused by one's own body and mind, miseries caused by other living entities and miseries caused by the demigods in the form of natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods,

hurricanes and so on]? What is the ultimate object and how are we to get it?" When we put these questions to a sadguru, then the time for emancipation from the entanglement of this non-eternal sphere has come. It was declared by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu to Srila Sanatana Goswami. You must have these types of questions in mind.

Devotee: You mentioned a different mantra - a Nandanandana mantra from a realized soul.

HDG Srila B. B. Tirtha Maharaj: Srila Sanatana Goswami has written this in his Brihad- Bhagavatamritam. You will get many things on the way to Krishna and, if you stop, you will not make any progress. Whatever you have gotten from your Gurudeva, you have to continue to do, with sincerity. Then you will cross Vaikuntha, you will cross Ayodhya and, eventually, you will reach the dhama (holy abode) of Nandanandana Krishna. Patience should be there, for without patience you cannot get anything.

Krishnaloka is described in Srimad Bhagavatam (10.20.47):

From the transcendental realm which is called Krishnaloka, there emanates a glowing effulgence that resembles the tail of a comet. This glowing effulgence is unlimited, immeasurable and unfathomable. Within this effulgence there are innumerable glowing planets, each of them self-luminous. Somewhere, a limited part of that glowing effulgence is covered by material energy, just as a part of the sky is covered by a cloud. Within this material energy there are innumerable universes, in every universe there are innumerable material planets, and the earth is one of these planets. Thus we can understand what an insignificant part of the entire cosmos is this globe on which we live.

His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Ballabh Tirtha Goswami Maharaj reached Vrindavana on 14 October 2002 for the one month long Vrajamandala Parikrama. Speaking on the subject "Who will show us Vraja-dhama?", Srila Tirtha Maharaj ji said that only a tatvik-vrajavasi like Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Sarawati Goswami Thakur Prabhupad can give us the knowledge of Vraja-dhama. Quoting from Srila Prabhupad's discourses of the 1932 Parikrama of Vrajamandala, Srila Tirtha Maharaj explained the significance of doing circumambulation of dhama. "This world is a perverted reflection of the spiritual world. All act as purushas and want to enjoy and lord it over others. If we want Sri Krishna to appear in our heart, we will have to make our mind

Vrindavan. Unless we do this Sri Krishna will not appear. In Vrindavan, Sri Krishna is the only Enjoyer and Master. He is Purushottama, the highest Person, all else are His prakriti."

Srila Tirtha Maharaj went on to describe how all the holy scriptures of India describe the glories of Vrajamandala, the land where Sri Krishna appeared 5000 years ago. Also known as Vrajabhumi or Vraja, the abode of Sri Krishna is the most sacred place of pilgrimage.
Vraj, Mathura, Vrindavan Dham, not only refer to the place located in the cultural and linguistic region of Vraja situated on the banks of the Yamuna river in the present day Uttar Pradesh (U.P, India) but, in the spiritual sense, this is the celestial transcendental abode of the Supreme Personality of the Godhead, Sri Krishna.

In the minds of devotees, there is no doubt that the spiritual abode of Krishna, descended as earthly Vrajamandala or Vraja-dhama. This terrestrial dhama is as much transcendental as the celestial abode. Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu has said that just as Sri Krishna is worshipable, His abode, Vrajamandala, is also worhsipable. Even the trees, creepers, rivers, ponds, streets etc., of Vrajamandala are as worshipable as the Lord. In Srimad Bhagavatam it has been stated;Vrindavan-dhama is non-different from Sri Krishna because the Name, Form, Attributes and the Place where the Lord appears are all identical with the Lord”. In the words of the great Gaudiya poet sage, Sri Krishnadas Kaviraj Goswami, "Vrajamandala manifests its true form only to those who look upon it with the eyes of love". We have to follow a pure devotee of Sri Krishna to get those eyes of love.
Hearing from a bonafide sadhu is the best way of getting the true knowledge of the abode of

Sri Krishna.

On the evening of 16 October, Srila Bhakti Ballabh Tirtha Goswami Maharaj came to the first camp of this year's Vrajamandala Parikrama, Mathura. Devotees from all over the world arrived for participating in the Parikrama, which commenced on 17 October.

Mathura is one of the sapta-puris, the seven holy cities of India. All major Puranas mention the name of Mathura, but only the Ramayana and the Harivamsha Purana describe the origin of the place. Traditionally founded by Madhu Daitya, the city was rehabilitated by Sri Shatrughna, the youngest brother of Lord Rama, after conquering the region from Lavana, the tyrannical

son of Madhu. The first reference to Mathura can be traced back to Atharva Veda in the sloka: ‘tadvishnu paramam padam sada pashyanti surya diviva chakshuratatam.

Long after the time of Shatrughna, there came the Shursena dynasty in which Lord Sri Krishna appeared in Dvapara Yuga. Mathura was widely known when Kamsa, the cruel king, made it his capital. Lord Sri Krishna rescued people from Kamsa. Later, Yudhishthir Mahraraj enthroned the great grandson of Sri Krishna, Vajranabha, who established the major temples of Vrajmandala. Most of these temples and their deities are still worshipped even today.

A Message of True Catholicism

On the morning of Friday 24 May 2002, Srila Bhakti Ballabh Tirtha Gosvami Maharaj, accompanied by Sripad Bhakti Vicar Vishnu Maharaj, Sriman Ananta Ram das Brahmacari, Sriman Srikant das Brahmacari and Sriman Sudarshan das Adhikari, alighted at London Heathrow Airport, commencing the 2002 preaching tour of the UK and European countries. Devotees from the US, Holland and other parts of the UK came to join the entourage, as they toured England through 2 June. After that, Maharaj and the other devotees continued the European tour in France, Holland, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Austria and Slovenia, which is still underway as of this writing (26 June 2002).

This year, the UK itinerary was diverse, including public programs at the Seekers' Trust in Kent, The London Theosophical Society, The De Nobili Interfaith Centre, Borders Books and Music in Central London and Gaur Govinda Gaudiya Math in Birmingham. There were also many wonderful home programs held in all four directions in Bromley, Slough, Brighton and Leicester. The devotees were blessed to have Maharaj's divine association during many auspicious days, including Nrsimha-caturdasi on 25 May, where Srila Tirtha Maharaj led a hair-raising Nrsimha kirtan, culminating in the enthusiastic chanting of "Jaya Dao! Jaya Dao!"

While every program was certainly memorable, there was one particular event that deserves special mention. On the morning of Monday 26 June, Srila Bhakti Ballabh Tirtha Gosvami Maharaj had a meeting with Father Alfred Agius, a Jesuit priest, who serves as head of the Westminster Interfaith group,

throughout the Catholic diocese of Westminster (greater London). Father Agius, an amicable person of genteel character, had been a missionary in India for many years and can speak fluent Hindi and Bengali. He is also familiar with Vedic literature and has a great respect for Indian theological schools of thought. This meeting, held in the Westminster Interfaith Office, located in a tidy and tastefully landscaped complex in Central London, was intimate, with only Maharaj, Father Agius and a few other devotees present.

After exchanging introductions, Father Agius showed the devotees a number of nice publications he had assembled for the Westminster Interfaith, demonstrating his sincere dedication to presenting religious perspectives from various faiths. Maharaj perused these materials for some time while the other devotees engaged in conversation with Father Agius.

After a few minutes, Maharaj suddenly began to speak. He seemed nearly trancelike, focusing his eyes straight ahead of him. Everyone else in the room, including Father Agius, immediately became silent and listened with rapt attention. First, Maharaj addressed the "Interfaith" theme of the day by defining the word "Hinduism".

"If you look up the word 'Hinduism' in the Oxford dictionary," he said, "you will find this definition: 'religious system practiced by a Hindu'."

Everyone laughed at this.

"So," he continued, "if you look up the word 'Hindu', the Oxford Dictionary says, 'One who practices a system of faith involving the worship of many gods and goddesses and belief in the caste system."

Maharaj went on to explain the vital difference between the idea of modern 'caste system', which is based upon birth, and the *varnasrama* system, which is based upon the character of a person. He showed how the *varnasrama* system is a natural thing. He said, "If someone has the tendency to worship and study scripture, he is a *brahmana*; if he has the tendency to rule, then he is a *ksatriya*. It does not matter if you use a different word, in your own language. The word is not important, but the concept is universal." Father Agius agreed whole-heartedly with this explanation.

Maharaj then went on to explain the misconception that Hinduism involves the worship of many gods and goddesses. He explained how the Vedas are designed to appeal to every type of human being, all of whom are influenced by the various modes of material nature. There has to be some system by which even those who are in ignorance may make advancement. Thusly, those

who are addicted to eating flesh and consuming intoxicants can be gradually elevated to a higher level by worshipping the goddess, Durga, who is the embodiment of the illusory energy of the Supreme Lord. By this gradual process, even the lowest of human beings can come to the higher platform, to *rajo-guna*, then to *sattva-guna* and eventually to *nirguna*, or transcendence. Maharaj clearly explained how this method was in no way 'polytheistic', as the ultimate goal was always devotion to the One Supreme Lord.

Father Agius and the other devotees listened most attentively as Maharaj went on to describe the nature of the soul, atma, and how it differed from the body. Next, he described *dharma* and was particularly emphatic as he differentiated it from the word "religion". In great detail, he described the ten Vedic *dharmas*, explaining how they "hold society together". One by one, Maharaj explained the efficacy of these *dharmas*, including celibacy, truthfulness, charitableness and non-violence.

When Maharaj came to describing non-violence, he gave a clear explanation of how violence always comes back to the person who projects it. He slapped the tabletop with his hand. He said, "If I hit this table, what happens? The result is that I hurt my own hand.
Similarly, if we perform any act of violence, it will immediately come back to us. This shows us, logically, that violence cannot sustain society; only the practice of non-violence can." Maharaj went on to describe *sanatana-dharma*, and Mahaprabhu's formula for World Peace, in which God must be at the center of all thought and action. He used the analogy of many circles with differing centers. "At some point, their circumferences will cross, indicating conflict," he said. "Only when their centers are focused on the same point will the circumferences stop crossing each other. Some may be larger, some smaller, some will perform a little service, while others will perform a lot; but all will fall around the same central point." This, he said, was the only actual formula for World Peace.

Then Maharaj went on to describe how the teachings of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu contained the tools to activate that formula. He beautifully began to describe the lovely *kirtan* of Sri Krishnachaitanya, especially in His pastimes during His pada-yatra through the jungles of India. "When Mahaprabhu chanted to the animals, the tiger and the deer were kissing! How is such a thing possible? Because the Holy Name awakened their true nature." Maharaj described how they are not tigers and deer; they are not enemies; they are not hunter and hunted. These are all illusory attributes-they are actually part and parcel of the Supreme Lord. The Holy Name has the power to awaken

the true self in all living beings. In a trancelike state, Maharaj chanted, *"Hari o' rama rama, hari o' rama rama!"* (Caitanya Bhagavata, Madhya-lila, 23.92).

Everyone was quiet for a few moments as Maharaj continued to gaze straight ahead, as if he were looking at his beloved Gurudeva. After this silence, Father Agius finally said, "Well, I have to thank you so much for that beautiful explanation of...of...well-reality!" He then humbly submitted to Maharaj that there were some branches of Catholicism, the Eastern Orthodox Church in particular, who share the view of the potency of chanting the Holy Name. He recited a prayer that he called the "Jesus Prayer", which, he said, is recited repeatedly by adherents to the Eastern Orthodox Church. Repetition of the Name of Jesus was its focus.

Maharaj then mentioned to Father Agius that he had been to the Vatican on a previous European preaching tour. He described how he found it odd that the devotees there did not take off their shoes before they entered sacred places. "Perhaps it is because it is a cold climate?" Maharaj offered. "Then perhaps, when it is warm weather, they might be encouraged to take off their shoes?" Father Agius smiled at this, understanding the point.

Maharaj then went on to describe his impressions when he had viewed the "Pieta" of Michelangelo. The "Pieta" is a marble sculpture of the body of Jesus lying in the arms of his mother Mary, after His crucifixion.

Maharaj said, with extreme emphasis, "When I saw this statue, frankly I was shocked!" "Shocked?" we asked.
"Yes! I was so shocked to see how Jesus died! And for the sake of the living beings!" Maharaj's face showed genuine compassion when he spoke about this. Father Agius seemed clearly touched by the experience of that meeting with Srila Tirtha Maharaj.

As we got up to go, Father Agius offered the devotees a little cultural exchange, and he began to sing a Bengali song by Rabindranath Tagore, much to the amusement of Sriman Ananta Ram das. It was a sweet and light-hearted end to an inspirational morning.

To conclude in a manner in keeping with Srila Bhakti Ballabh Tirtha Gosvami Maharaj's teachings, we note that the English dictionary defines the word "Catholic" as "wide- ranging", "broad" and "all-embracing". Our *sampradaya,* descending from Sriman Mahaprabhu is often also referring to the "all-embracing doctrine of Divine Love". This memorable meeting between His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Ballabh Tirtha Maharaj and His

Grace Father Alfred Agius elucidated the true meaning of the word "Catholic", of "Interfaith" and of "Divine Love" for all sentient beings and their Ultimate Source, the Supreme Lord, Sri Krishna.

Sanatana Dharma

April 5, 2003

Due to the lack of real knowledge about the subject matter of Sanatana Dharma', now-a- days asanatana dharma is being spread as sanatana dharma. People, lacking the knowledge of the real meaning of sanatana dharma, are considering sanatana dharma as the religion of Hindus only; which is very limited conception. What is the real meaning of sanatana dharma? Following is an excerpt from a lecture given by the president-acharya of Sree Caitanya Gaudiya Math, Sree Srimad Bhakti Ballabha Tirtha Goswami Maharaj on the topic of sanatana dharma.

One thing is dharma' and another is religion'. Both do not convey same meaning. We do not find any other word in English, so we use religion. In the oxford dictionary the meaning of religion is, "A system of faith, especially personal God entitled to obedience." Therefore religion' word is not a proper translation of the word dharma'.

We should understand it very well that performing rituals alone is not dharma. Upasana (worship) is the method. Mind will get purified by the remembrance of Supreme Lord (Bhagavan). Pure mind will result into love for Supreme Lord and love for Supreme Lord will cause the development of love for all the living beings related to Him. There will not be any violence towards anybody. Therefore love for Supreme Lord is the highest dharma.

Srila Sacidananda Thakur speaking in relation to the word dharma' mentions that the meaning of dharma' is nature'. Whatever the nature of each, is their dharama. In reality, dharma is of two types: Naimittik dharma (temporary dharma) and Nitya dharma. (eternal religion). For example, the nature of water is liquidity. However due to excess cold it takes the form of ice, and on

getting heat, again change to water. The cold was the cause for the water to become ice, so ice is the naimittik dharma of water and liquidity is eternal dharma.

Similarly, two kinds of dharma have been seen for the jivas (living entities). Naimittik and Nitya. But before understanding these, we must understand what is the nature of jiva.
Because only when the knowledge of the nature is there, it can be better understood which dharma of jiva is Naimittik and which is nitya dharma?

Now let's try to understand who is jiva in nature? Normally we understand body as the person, but do not tell body as person. We use the following terminology in our daily use - my body, my mind, my intelligence etc. Nobody says I am body, I am mind'. This explains that the speaker of I' is different from body.

Even if we see externally, nobody identifies body as the person. Whether it's an atheistic country or theistic, everywhere until the body has the conscious principle it is considered as a person. On loosing conscious principle, nobody calls the dead body as a person. So burning the dead body, giving it to animals or birds, does not cause any punishment. And nowhere the dead body has the right to cast vote.

Until the body has conscious principle, which is also called as atma or soul in the scriptural language, it is identified as a person and not a body. Until the atomic soul, the energy of the eternally existing, eternally blissful, eternally knowledgeable Supreme Lord, remains in the body, it is identified as a person. By the existence of that principle, I' remains and by the absence of that principle, I' do not remain; that is my nature (means, I am a soul). Soul is eternal, body is not eternal.

Now let's think about the real position of the living entities (jivas). Where from the living entities came? What is it's dharma? Lord Sri Krishna tells about it at one place in Gita that living entities are parts of His energy. However, at another place he says that they are His own parts. On the basis of second statement, some say that jiva is part of Bhagavan, so he is also Bhagavan. However this is not correct. The jivas are not mentioned as Bhagavan here. Both of the Gita's statements should be taken. Lord Krishna says, "apareyam itas tv anyam prakrtim viddhi me param! jiva-bhutam maha-baho yayedam

dharyate jagat!! (O mighty- armed Arjuna! There is another, superior energy of Mine, which comprises the living entities). According to Gita, living entities are not part of Supreme Lord, a part of His energy. Because the part of the Lord is Lord only. Every part of infinite is infinite. The part of Lord is called as svamsa, all incarnations are Lord Krishna's svamsa. Every part of infinite is infinite, but part of the energy of infinite cannot be infinite. For example, the part of sun will be sun, however his light rays cannot be called sun. Even all the light rays collected together cannot be called sun. Similarly living entity (jiva) is part of Lord's energy, not of Lord's.

The jnanis explain tattvamasi' as You are that'. However Vaisnava teachers refute it and explain it as, tasya tvam asi, you are His or you are His (Lord's) servant.

Sun is 14,00,000 times the size of earth. If the sun's light is coming to my room by window, then I cannot say that sun has come to my room. Sun is 14,00,000 times of the size of whole earth, how can it come? It is the light rays of sun or the part of sun's energy. Even all the light rays collected together cannot make sun. Sun gives light, light does not become sun.

Lord has infinite potencies or energies, Gita talks about two of those, superior' and inferior' potency. Living entities (jivas) are superior energy. Material and subtle bodies are inferior energy. Sri Chaitanya Maharprabhu made it more clear that jiva is the part of Lord's marginal potency, atomic conscious. Jiva is from Bhagavan, in Bhagavan, from Bhagavan and therefore for Bhagavan. For example, if one asks the finger of hand, who are you?' and finger were to reply I am the person'. If we take the photo of finger, someone may get misunderstanding about person, because that is not a person. Similarly, if we consider jiva as Bhagavan, then we will be misunderstanding Bhagavan.

Just like, finger is a small part of body, jiva is also a small part of Lord's potency, not the complete Lord. Some people also say that we were Lord earlier, however became jiva by the influence of maya and we will become Lord again by chanting Soham! Soham!. This is completely wrong. This is not scriptural injunction. Because Lord can never become Jiva, Absolute is always Absolute.

Therefore Lord is eternal. Lord's potency is eternal. Jiva, the part of Lord's potency, is also eternal. Their relationship is also eternal and their dharma is also eternal. This is called as eternal dharma or Santana Dharma'. The meaning of Sanatana is, whatever existed in past, is existing and will remain to exist. However the dharma of body is not sanatana, because the body is destructible. Mind. The subtle body made of mind, intelligence and ego, is also not eternal. When one's tendency for sensual enjoyment ends, his subtle body also ends.
Therefore the dharma of destructible thing cannot be Sanatana Dharma'. This is called as Naimittik Dharma'. Due to the influence of maya, soul has got two coverings, first is material covering and second is subtle covering. Both of these bodies have different nature. How many different types of material dharmas we have in our India?

Geographical barriers, Social barriers, National barriers! But the soul is superior to mind and body. It is eternal. Therefore it's dharma is also eternal. Sanatana dharma is dharma for not only India, but it is the dharma for all the living entities, who are in innumerable universes. The essence is that soul is eternal, body is destructible. Therefore all body related dharmas are destructible and only soul's dharma is eternal. Living entities are part and parcel of Lord's potency. Potency is always under the control of potent and serves the potent. Similarly the service of Lord is the highest duty of living entity. This dharma of soul is known as Bhagavat dharma, Sanatana dharma or Vaishnav Dharama. This is natural dharma of the living entities.

Hari-Bhajan in Married Life

(Translated from the Viswa Shanti Sutra Pravachan Mala booklet, published by Sree Chaitanya Gaudiya Math, Chandigarh)

To spread the message of pure love as taught and practiced by Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, and to give mercy to enslaved jivas (living beings) like

us, the present acarya of our math, His Divine Grace Sri Srimad Bhakti Ballabha Tirtha Goswami Maharaja, reached Bhatinda along with several other saints despite the precarious condition in Punjab. (Punjab was suffering from terrorism during those days). On the last day of the festival, while addressing the gathering at night, Srila Guru Maharaja began by saying that one gentleman had visited him recently. He had asked, "What is the duty of grhasthas like us?
How should we perform hari-bhajan?" Srila Guru Maharaja went on to say that many married persons ask him questions about this subject. They say that they like to do bhajan and go to spiritual festivals but don't get time from their worldly responsibilities. They also say that sadhus don't have anything to do other than hari-bhajan but grhasthas have so many responsibilities to fulfill. What should they do in such a state?

Addressing such grhasthas, Srila Guru Maharaja said, "Let's assume you have many things to do and are always engaged in some or the other work. Don't you take some time off to eat while engaged in work? You eat in the morning, you take lunch, and then you take dinner.
Some people even eat in the evening. We have so many things to do and yet we find time to eat 3 or 4 times a day. Why? Because we have understood the importance of eating. We know that if we don't eat, our bodies will become weak. However, we have not understood the importance of hari-bhajan. That is why we are not able to find time for it."

Srila Guru Maharaja went on to say that necessity is the mother of invention. When we understand the importance of hari-bhajan, we will also find some time for it. At our maths in Calcutta and other cities, sat-sanga (scriptural discourse) is a daily activity. Some people come daily for sat-sanga but if they are unable to come for some reason like rain, etc. they always hanker for sat-sanga and look forward to when they will be able to go to the math and hear the hari-katha. Why does this happen? Because their soul has been awakened. When their soul does not get its food, they feel pain and emptiness. Therefore they somehow try to manage and get more and more time for sat-sanga.

One can easily find some time for bhajan, even in the midst of innumerable responsibilities. To further explain this point, Srila Guru Maharaja gave the example of Ambarisa Maharaja from Srimad-Bhagavatam. How many responsibilities might we have? At the most 2 or 3 big shops, a big piece of land, or a farm? However, Srila Sukadeva Goswami related to Pariksit Maharaja the story of Maharaja Ambarisa who was the emperor of the whole

world. Now you can imagine how many responsibilities he might have had. Yet, he performed bhajan in such a manner that the curse of Durvasa Rsi, which never goes in vain, was not even able to touch him.

nabhagad ambariso
'bhun maha-
bhagavatah krti
nasprsad brahma-
sapo 'pi yam na
pratihatah kvacit

"From Nabhaga, Maharaja Ambarisa took birth. Maharaja Ambarisa was an exalted devotee, celebrated for his great merits. Although he was cursed by an infallible brahmana, the curse could not touch him." (S.B. 9.4.13)

Maharaja Pariksit was surprised to hear this and he become interested in hearing more about the character of such an amazing devotee of the lord. Sukadeva Goswami continued:

sri-suka uvaca
ambariso maha-
bhagah
sapta-dvipavatim
mahim avyayam ca
sriyam labdhva
vibhavam catulam
bhuvi

mene 'tidurlabham
pumsam sarvam tat
svapna-samstutam

vidvan vibhava-
nirvanam tamo visati yat
puman

(S.B. 9.14.15-16)

One who possesses wealth is considered to be fortunate. In this respect, Ambarisa Maharaja was very, very fortunate. He had inexhaustible, unlimited opulence and prosperity. Ordinary people cannot even conceive of his wealth. In spite of being such a great emperor, he considered all of his wealth to be very insignificant and temporary like a dream.

On the footpaths of Calcutta, we can see many beggars that are born and die there while begging. Think of a beggar who is hungry and sleeping on an old and dirty sheet. He is dreaming that he has become a big minister or a king. Everybody is honoring him. There are beautiful arrangements of various kinds of foodstuff and drinks for his satisfaction. There are arrangements of air-conditioned rooms for his residence. Whenever he wants to travel, he goes by airplane and various other luxurious vehicles. While seeing such a beautiful dream, he wakes up and sees that he is still sleeping on the footpath over a torn sheet. So his dream of being a king seems completely false. In the same way, although Maharaja Ambarisa possessed immense wealth, he considered it all to be false and temporary. He did not have even a tinge of attachment for his possessions. He knew very well that his wealth could be destroyed while he was alive or he would have to leave it behind. Separation was inevitable. He also knew that attachment to temporary material wealth causes one to fall down into ignorance, hellish conditions or miseries. This is the secret. To live in the world while not belonging to it. Sadhus also live in this world but they never want to enjoy it.
Sadhus consider themselves, this world, and all the belongings of this world to be the objects of enjoyment for the Supreme Lord.

That is the reason why they never get entangled in this material world.
It is known as sudarsan. In the Bhagavad-Gita (9.24), the Supreme Lord Sri Krsna says:

aham hi sarva yajnanambhokta ca prabhur eva ca

"I am the enjoyer of all kind of sacrifices. I am the doer. Nobody else is the enjoyer or doer."

When we come under the maya potency of the Supreme Lord, we consider ourselves to be the doer or enjoyer. Maharaja Ambarisa, in spite of being the sole emperor of the world, never got the false pride of being the owner of the earth. For example, when we go on pilgrimage, we pay 4000 rupees to the railway company to book a passenger bogie. For one month, we travel in that bogie to all the holy places. During our pilgrimage we pay full attention to the cleanliness, electricity, and water supply in the bogie. If anything goes wrong, we go to the station office and get it fixed. After one month, we reach Bhatinda (Punjab) and get down from the train so fast it's like there is a race going on.

After leaving the bogie we never look back at it. We spent so many days in it. We took care of its cleanliness, electricity, water, etc. and spent 4000 rupees on it. However, we have not even a slight attachment for that bogie. What is the reason for this?

The reason is knowledge

The knowledge that this bogie is not ours. It belongs to the railway company. It was only meant for our pilgrimage. If we get a similar kind of realization about this material world, we will think that all our possessions, wife, son, family, house and our very body belong to the Supreme Lord. Always think that we have got it for a fixed period of time as per the will of the Supreme Lord, and after finishing that period, it will go away by the will of the Supreme Lord. Then we will not keep attachment for this temporary world which is full of miseries. Sometimes, travelers come to a dharmasala (lodge), stay for some time, and then go on to their destinations. Similarly, we should not have attachment for this world while living in this world. However, these are all not just talking matterswe should realize them.

Just think!

Maharaja Ambarisa did not have even the least bit of attachment for such a great kingdom and immense wealth. And here we are not able to leave our attachment for a house or a cottage. If we lose a ten dollar bill we will think about it continuously. What is the reason? How had Maharaja Ambarisa got such a consciousness? In reply, Srimad-Bhagavatam says:

vasudeve bhagavati
tad-bhaktesu ca sadhusu
prapto bhavam param
visvam yenedam
lostravat smrtam (S.B.
9.4.17)

Maharaja Ambarisa had bhava (strong attachment with feelings: the first stage of development of love of God) in the eternal blissful form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vasudeva, and in the saintly persons who are the Lord's devotees. That is why the whole universe and all its wealth were valueless for him. Therefore, unless we get a higher taste, we will not be able to forgo our attachments to this world. For example, if you put a little sugar or a rasagulla in the mouth of a child who has eaten dirt, he will spit out all the dirt from his mouthsomething he would not do even after getting scolded for it. He will then become greedy to eat the rasagulla. Similarly, by being attached to the Supreme Lord and His devotees, all our attachments to this world will come to an end. With attachment to the

Supreme Lord, all our greed, ignorance, miseries, and fear of hell will end and we will get the highest taste for the Supreme Lord.

Gaur Premanande! Hari Hari Bol!

Teachings of the Gita

Mangalacarana

Prior to every lecture, His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Ballabh Tirtha Maharaja offers prayers to His Gurudeva, the Vaishnavas, the Devotees of the Supreme Lord and to the Supreme Lord Himself. The beautiful prayers (and translations of the same) which He chanted on the evening of this lecture appear below.

saksad-dharitvena samasta
sastrair uktas tatha bhavyata
eva sadbhih kintu prabhor
yah priya eva tasya vande
guroh sri-caranaravindam

"The Spiritual Master is to be honored as much as the Supreme Lord because He is the most Confidential Servitor of the Lord. This is acknowledged in all revealed scriptures and followed by all authorities. I offer my respectful obeisances unto the Lotus Feet of such a Spiritual Master, who is a bonafide representative of Sri Hari."

vancha-
kalpatarubhyas ca
krpa-sindhubhya eva
ca patitanam
pavanebhyo
vaisnavebhyo namo
namah

"I am repeatedly making obeisances to the Vaisnavas who fulfill all desires like a wish- yielding tree and who are gracious to all like an ocean and who are redeemers of the fallen souls."

sankarsanah karana-toya-sayi
garbhoda-sayi ca payobdhi-
sayi sesas ca yasyamsa-kalah

sa nitya- nandakhya-ramah
saranam mamastu

"I take absolute shelter of Sriman Nityananda Prabhu, Who is Baladev Himself and Whose Partial Manifestations and Parts of the Partial Manifestations are Sankarsan, Karanabdhisayi, Garbhodasayi, Ksirodasayi and Sesa."

Karanatoyasayi (or *Karanabdhisay*i): First *Purusavatara*. He is the first manifestation of the Supreme Being with respect to the creation of infinite *Brahmandas* (universes) Who lies on the Causal Ocean.
Garbhodasayi: Second *Purusavatara*. He is the second manifestation of the Supreme Being lying on the Ocean produced by His sweat. He is the Indwelling Oversoul and Sustainer of the infinite *Brahmandas* created by the first *Purusavatara.*
Payobdhisayi (or *Ksirodakasayi*): Third *Purusavatara*. He is the third manifestation of the Supreme Being lying on the Milk Ocean, Whom Demigods approach for their rescue from the oppressions of the demons. He is the Indwelling Monitor and Sustainer of each *Brahmanda,* and of every spirit soul.
Sesa: the last manifestation of the Supreme Being Who, in the Form of a Huge Serpent, holds all the worlds on His head as if they were mustard seeds.

namo maha-
vadanyaya krsna-
prema-pradaya te
krsnaya krsna-
caitanya namne
gaura-tvise namah

"I pay my innumerable prostrated obeisances to the Lotus Feet of the Supreme Lord, Who is Krsna Himself, Whose Name is Krsnacaitanya, Whose complexion is Golden,

Who is Most Munificent an Who is the Bestower of Krsna-prema (love for the Supreme Lord)."

tapta-kancana-
gaurangi radhe
vrndavanesvari
vrsabhanu-sute devi
pranamami hari-
priye

"O Goddess Sri Radhe! O daughter of Sri Vrsabhanu! You are the beloved Consort of Sri Hari; Your complexion is like molten gold, you are the Presiding Deity of Vrindavan. I pay my innumerable prostrated obeisances to Thy Lotus Feet."

he krsna karuna-
sindho dina-bandho
jagat-pate gopesa
gopika-kanta radha-
kanta namo 'stu te

"O Supreme Lord Sri Krsna, You are an ocean of kindness, You are the Friend to the submissive, Lord of the World, Lord of the Gopas (cowherd men of Vrndavan), Beloved Consort of the Gopis (cowherd ladies of Vrindavan) and Most Beloved Consort of Radha. I pay my innumerable prostrated obeisances to Thy Lotus Feet."

vande nandavraja-
strinam padare
numabhiksnasah yasam
harikathodgitam punati
bhubanatrayam

"I always sing in adoration the glories of the dust of the Lotus Feet of the Gopis of Nanda-Vrajadham (the Transcendental Realm of the Sweet Pastimes of Nandanandan, Sri Krsna), Whose Krsnakatha (narration of the glories of the Name, Form, Attributes, Entourage and Pastimes of Lord Krsna) sanctify the three worlds, heaven, earth and underworld, i.e. the entire universe."

bhaktya vihina
aparadhalaksaih ksiptasca

kamadi tarangamadhye
krpamayi tvam saranam
prapanna vrnde numaste
caranaravindam

"I am devoid of devotion, I am replete with millions of offenses, distracted by waves of evil desires. O compassionate Vrnda-devi I take shelter of You and I pay my innumerable prostrated obeisances at Your Lotus Feet. Kindly rescue me.

sri-krsna-
caitanya
prabhu-
nityananda
sri-advaita-gadadhara
srivasadi-gaura-bhakta-
vrnda

"I offer my obeisances to Sri Krsna Caitanya, Prabhu Nityananda, Sri Advaita, Gadadhara, Srivasa and all others in the line of devotion."

Hare Krsna Hare
Krsna Krsna Krsna
Hare Hare Hare
Rama Hare Rama
Rama Rama Hare
Hare

First of all, I pay my innumerable prostrated, humble obeisances to the Lotus Feet of my Most Revered Gurudeva, Om Visnupad 108 Sri Srimad Bhakti Dayita Madhava Goswami Maharaja, and pray for His causeless mercy to give me strength, to sing the glories of the Supreme Lord Sri Krsna, to purify my mind and to get one-pointed exclusive devotion to Sri

Krsna. I also pay my innumerable, prostrated, humble obeisances to the Lotus Feet of my Shiksha Gurus and pray for Their causeless mercy, to give me strength, to sing the glories of the Supreme Lord Sri Krsna, to purify my mind

and to get exclusive devotion to Sri Krsna. I pay my due respects to all who are present here.

The Message of the Bhagavad-gita

The True Nature of the Supreme Lord

Today's subject is "Teachings of the Gita." You have heard the name of "Gita." It is universally adored. Everybody knows It. But the difficulty is this: there are thousands of commentaries, and in these commentaries the commentators have expressed their views on the Gita. They all have different views, and ordinary people are confused to know the actual teaching of Srimad Bhagavad-gita.

The Speaker of the Gita is the Supreme Lord, Sri Krsna. Those who have got entrance into the Heart of Sri Krsna can know the real implication and significance of the sayings of Sri Krsna and for what purpose He has spoken and advised. Outside people cannot understand.

But In India and also outside India, you will find many people who say, "We do not believe Krsna is the Supreme Lord because He was born; therefore, he was a human being. He may have many powers, maybe even superhuman powers. He may be a great politician, a great diplomat."

Even those who go through the Gita will also talk like this. It is very astounding. When I ask them, "Have you gone through the Gita?" the reply is, "Oh, yes." I tell them, "How? If you have gone through the Gita, then you should accept the teachings of the Gita."

The Supreme Lord Sri Krsna says in the Gita:

mattah parataram
nanyat kincid asti
dhananjaya mayi
sarvam idam protam
sutre mani-gana iva
(7.7)

"There is nothing superior to Me" (mattah)-- With emphasis Sri Krsna says that He is the Supreme Lord. We read the Gita, but we do not believe the teachings of the Supreme Lord Sri Krsna? How is it? *"Mattah parataram nanyat, kincid asti dhananjaya, mayi sarvam idam protam, sutre mani-gana iva:" "Nothing is separable from Me. Everything* **inseparably exists within Me, just as a thread when it is strung through gems, all the gems are inseparable."**

aham hi sarva-
yajnanam bhokta ca
prabhur eva ca na tu
mam abhijananti
tattvenatas cyavanti te
(9.2)

"I am the only Master and the only Enjoyer of all *yajnas*" (sacrifices). "*Aham*:" "I am the only one." "*Aham* hi:" "certainly, surely I am." "I" denotes a person. "*Na tu mam abhijananti tattvenatas cyavanti te*:" "Those who do not believe this are detached from Reality."

There are many other *slokas* in the Gita substantiating Sri Krsna as the Supreme Lord:

aham sarvasya
prabhavo mattah
sarvam pravartate iti
matva bhajante mam
budha bhava samanvitah
(10.8)

"I am the cause of all creation, all origination." "*Aham:*" "I" and "*mattah*:" "from Me" do not signify an Impersonal God. He says to Arjuna, "*Sarvam pravartate*:" "Through My initiative and imparted power, all are set into action."

brahmano hi
pratinthaham
amatasyavyayasya ca
sasvatasya ca dharmasya

sukhasyaikantikasya ca
(14.27)

***"Brahmano hi pratisthaham:"* "I am the cause of the Impersonal Formless God (*Brahman)*." That Impersonal Formless God is the halo of Sri Krsna's own Light, emanating from Sri Krsna Himself. *Pratistha* means "foundation." Sri Krsna is the foundation of *Brahman*. "*Amrtasyavyayasya ca*:" He is the foundation of *amrta* (Ambrosia), the foundation of *avyaya* (Imperishability) and the foundation of *sasvata* (Eternity). He is also the object of *vraja prem* (exclusive pure love and devotion).**

Krsna is the Supreme Lord. How can we know the Supreme Lord? Without His Grace, nobody can know Him. If anybody says, "Yes, I can know Him," then he will be equal to the Supreme Lord, or above the Supreme Lord. But the Supreme Lord, Infinite and Absolute, is One. Nothing can be outside the Infinite. If you say, "This flower is outside the Infinite," then the Infinite becomes finite. Even a particle of dust cannot be outside the Infinite, or the Absolute will lose Its position. Absolute is One. His Forms and Pastimes may be many, but according to Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the highest Form of God is Nandanandana Sri Krsna. You can get all kinds of bliss-- *ananda*-- in the worship of Nandanandana Sri Krsna. This is the teaching of the Supreme Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

Now, as there is no equal and no one greater than Sri Krsna, without His Grace, without the Will of Sri Krsna, nobody can know Him. If anybody goes to see the President of USA at Washington can he go straight to him? There are many security guards. He has to take permission; he will have to submit his request to the lower officer, and from there it will go to the higher officers. Ultimately, it may reach the President or it may not. Even after receipt of the petition, he may say, "No, I've got no time." Or he may fix one date and time to see him. Without his consent, you cannot see the President.

The Supreme Lord, is the Lord of all Lords, the Lord of infinite *brahmandas* (material universes), infinite *vaikunthas* (spiritual universes). Without His Will, nobody can go to Him or see Him. If I can grasp Him, if I can get Him by my own willpower, then I become predominant and His position is secondary. But, if by His will I can get Him, i.e., if I act according to the will of the Supreme Lord, then He will be pleased. If by that I get Him, then He will not lose His absolute position. The only way to get Him is to take absolute shelter at the Lotus Feet of Supreme Lord and to act according to His will.

There is no other way to get Him, except exclusive pure devotion.

Therefore, those who have surrendered to Sri Krsna, who have got entrance into the Heart of Sri Krsna, can understand the implications and significance of the teachings of Sri Krsna.
Those who have no knowledge of Sri Krsna, who have not submitted to Sri Krsna-- how can they know? They may write many commentaries, but they cannot comprehend the actual significance of the teachings of Sri Krsna.

Seeing the sad plight of the conditioned souls of the world, the Supreme Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, out of compassion, sent His own men-- Srila Bhaktivinode Thakur and Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur to the world to rescue the fallen souls. Srila Saraswati Goswami Thakur extended His grace through His Entourage all over the world. They were most powerful spiritual personalities. They refuted all antidevotional contentions by reasoning and by scriptural evidences. Bhaktivinode Thakur has written the significance of the teachings of the Gita. If we go through His writings, we shall be able to know the real implication of the teachings of the Gita.

Evidence from the *Kathopanisad:*

nayam atma pravacanena
labhyo na medhaya na
bahuna srutena yam evaiva
vrnute tena labhyas
tasyaiva atma vivrnute tanum svam (2.23)

"God cannot be attained, realized by delivering lectures, by intellect, by becoming a great erudite scholar. The Supreme Lord will reveal His own Eternal Form only to a bonafide surrendered soul."

As my Divine Master has ordered me, I should speak whatever I have heard from Him and from my superiors, *guruvarga* (the line of teachers in the preceptorial channel). That recitation will purify my mind and take me to the Transcendental Realm. I should not speak to please the worldly people. If I do so, my spiritual life will be spoiled.

At a young age, I renounced the world and I took shelter at the Lotus Feet of Gurudev. I try to carry out the orders of my Divine Master to speak what I have heard so far from Him, from other *Siksa Gurus* (teachers) and from authentic scriptures. That recitation after hearing will purify my mind. Wherever I go, although I've got my drawbacks, I've got no hold over English

or other languages, I try to carry out the orders of my Divine Master. If I go on speaking about worldly things, my mind will become attached to worldly things. If I speak about Krsna, my mind will go there. This is called "chanting"-- chanting of the glories of the Supreme Lord, His Name, Forms, Attributes and Pastimes. Chanting is one form of devotion; hearing is also a form of devotion. Pariksit Maharaja, by hearing only, got the ultimate goal of life. If we speak about worldly things, then worldly, temporary things will come to our minds. Ultimately, we shall have frustration in our life.

You will find at the end of the Gita, its glorification:

gita su-gita
kartavya kim anyaih
sastra-vistaraih ya
svayam
padmanabhasya
mukha-padmad-
vinihsrta

"Gita should be rightly read, with one-pointed devotion for the satisfaction of Sri Krsna. No other scripture is needed if one takes shelter of the Gita. Gita emerges from the Holy Lips of Sri Krsna and is one with Him."

It is not material sound. In material sound, you will find the thing referred to by a sound is different from the sound. If you utter the word "water, water, water," the water-word is not the water- thing. The word "water" refers to a thing understood to be water. Here you will find a difference between the water-word and the thing referred to by the word "water." But Krsna and the Name of Krsna are One and the same. Gita and Krsna are identical. So, by taking shelter of the Gita we can have contact with Krsna. We have gone through the Gita, we have read the Gita, but we have no devotion to Krsna, This is not actual reading. If we read Gita actually, we will have devotion to Sri Krsna.

As I've said earlier, without the grace of Sri Krsna, we cannot know the significance of the teachings of the Gita. Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu has taught us in regard to this. When He had been to South India, one brahmana used to read Gita daily with great devotion at the Raìganatha Temple. He had no knowledge of Sanskrit. As such, he committed mistakes in pronunciation. Many pandits also used to go visit the temple. When they heard this brahmana reading the Gita and committing mistakes, they objected:

"Why are you reading Gita? First, you should learn Sanskrit. You pronounce it correctly, then read it."
But without heeding to any remarks of the people, with rapt attention he used to read the Gita from the beginning to the end. Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu came to visit the Temple. He saw a brahmana reading the Gita with rapt attention and great devotion. Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was very much attracted. He stood at the back and was hearing. After the completion of the reading of the Gita, the brahmana stood up and he saw Chaitanya Mahaprabhu-the Extraordinary Divine Personality, Golden Complexion, and Tall, with Arms down to His Knees. Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu expressed His satisfaction, "I am very glad to hear your recitation of the Gita."
The brahmana said, "I've got no right to read the Gita, but it is the order of my Divine Master. He said, 'You should read Gita from the beginning to the end completely, and after that you may take food.' I cannot understand any verse. I've got no knowledge of Sanskrit. Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu said, "Yes, you say you do not understand the Gita, but while you read the Gita you were weeping; tears were flowing down from your eyes-- why? If you do not understand Gita, why were you weeping?"
The brahmana replied, "I have not divulged my heart to anybody, but You are a Divine Personality. It is not good to conceal my heart before You. It is true, I do not understand the Gita, but as long as I read the Gita I see before me Supreme Lord Sri Krsna working as a servant, being subdued by the devotion of Arjuna. He is the Supreme Lord, Lord of all lords, of infinite *brahmandas* (material cosmos), infinite *vaikunthas* (transcendental realms).
Seeing His *Bhakta Vatsalya Murti* (His profound affection for His devotee), I could not control the flow of tears from my eyes. Immediately, it comes. It is very surprising that the Supreme Lord is working as a driver and His devotee is ordering Him:

senayor ubhayor
madhye ratham sthapaya
me 'cyuta (1.21)

Arjuna said to Krsna, 'O Acyuta (O infallible one), place My chariot *(rath)* in front of the armed forces of the rival warring groups".

Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu said to the brahmana with assertion, "Your reading of the Gita is crowned with success, as you have devotion to Sri Krsna."

Many people have distorted the teachings of the Gita to fulfill vile mentality. Once, one younger God-brother of our Guru Maharaja, Pujyapada Santa Gosvami Maharaja had been to Kashmir during the British administration. At that time, the Maharaja of Kashmir was Hari Simha. He arranged one meeting. Swamiji was a royal guest. The invitees were all dignitaries, rich people, and many of them owned tea gardens. The Maharaja of Kashmir also owned tea gardens. Our Siksa Guru, Pujyapada Santa Maharaja is a very spirited person. He did not hesitate to tell the truth. In His speech, He said emphatically:

"Those who are virtuous should not commit sins. They should not gamble, should not have illicit connection with women, should not slaughter animals and should not take intoxication, and even tea!"

The tea-garden owners were thunderstruck to hear this. They thought that they had committed a mistake by inviting Swamiji and said, "We are advertising tea, and Swamiji has come to destroy our business..."
One of the tea-garden owners came to Swamiji and said, "Swamiji! You have spoken against tea, but it is glorified in the Gita."
Swamiji said, "I have gone through the Gita several times. I have not seen it." "Yes, it is there."
In India the word for "tea" is cha." So the tea-garden owner showed that verse from the Gita:

sarvasya caham hrdi
sannivisto mattah smrtir
jnanam apohanam ca vedais
ca sarvair aham eva vedyo
vedanta-krd veda-vid eva CAHAM
(15.15)

"In the form of *ca* (pronounced 'cha'), 'tea', I have entered into the hearts of all *jivas* (living entities). And lastly, Krsna Himself says 'I am cha' (*caham*)!"

This is **not** the meaning. The meaning is twisted here to serve one's ulterior motive. This sort of commentary will misguide the reader and be of no benefit. The real significance of this verse is:

"I reside in the hearts of all living beings as Indwelling God. It is from Me that

living beings have got memory and knowledge, previous precepts and concepts and elimination of the same. All the Vedas substantiate Me as the one object to be known. I am the author of the Vedanta (vedanta-krd), and versed in the Vedas (veda-vid)."

Sri Krsna's Lessons to Arjuna

Gita is part of Mahabharata. Vaisampayana Rsi has narrated the infatuation and mourning of Arjuna to Janmejaya in "Bhisma-Parva" (Bhisma Canto of Mahabharata). Sanjaya got a boon from Vyssadeva Muni that he would be able to see the happenings in Kuruksetra (the site of the battle) and narrate the same to Dhrtarastra:

dhrtarastra uvaca
dharma-ksetre kuru-
ksetre samaveta
yuyutsavah mamakah
pandavas caiva
kim akurvata sanjaya (1.1)

Dhrtarastra asked Sanjaya, "My sons, Duryodhana and others, and the Pandavas, Yudhisthira Maharaja and others, are assembling in the holy place of Kuruksetra with the desire for waging war. What did they do?"

Visvanatha Cakravarti in his commentary has said: "They have come with the desire to fight-- they will fight. Where is the scope of questioning it?" But Dhrtarastra has some doubt: 'Kuruksetra is a holy place, and the Pandavas are naturally religious-minded. They will accept an agreement or treaty. But my sons may not accept. But by the influence of Kuruksetra, their minds may be changed. So there may be an agreement, peace.' That doubt was in Dhrtarastra's mind, so he asked what they did. But inwardly, he was thinking, 'If there is no war, then always our sons will be in danger from the Pandavas throughout their lives. So it is better that there should be a fight'."

As per the desire of Arjuna, Krsna placed the chariot before the Kauravas (the army of Dhrtarastra's sons). Arjuna was bewildered to see all his relatives before him and he was shivering. He saw in front of him his paternal grandfather, Bhisma, his guru Dronacarya, as well as paternal uncles, brothers-in-law, kith and kin. He became perplexed: All have come to sacrifice their lives. If I get the kingdom by killing them, I shall not be happy.

Let them kill me, yet I shall not fight." He left his powerful mythological bow, Gandiva.

On seeing the infatuation of Arjuna and his reluctance to fight, Sri Krsna reproached him and said:

sri-bhagavan uvaca
kutas tva kasmalam
idam visame
samupasthitam

anarya-justam
asvargyam akirti-
karam arjuna (2.2)

"O Arjuna! How have you got this infatuation in this most critical juncture in front of the hostile opponent on the battlefield? This may be befitting to a non-Aryan, but this sort of deliberation of yours at this stage is unwarranted. This will deter you in getting celestial prosperity and destroy your name and fame."

klaibyam ma sma gamah
partha naitat tvayy
upapadyate ksudram
hrdaya-daurbalyam
tyaktvottistha parantapa
(2.3)

"O Partha (Arjuna)! You should not become impotent. It is not befitting to you. Shake off your weakness of heart, rise up and be ready to fight. You are capable of crushing the enemy."

sri-bhagavan uvaca
asocyan anvaaocas
tvam prajna-vadams ca
bhasase gatasun

agatasums ca
nanusocanti panditah
(2.11)

"You are speaking to me like a very learned person, but you are mourning for the undeserved. The wise do not mourn either for the born or for the dead, because atma (the real self) is eternal and has no birth, no death."

dehino 'smin yatha dehe
kaumaram yauvanam
jara tatha dehantara-
praptir dhiras tatra na
muhyati (2.13)

"A corporeal living entity undergoes transformation in his body-- childhood, youth and infirmity. Death is a kind of transformation. The wise do not become deluded by this."

na jayate mriyate va
kadacin nayam bhutva
bhavita va bhuyah ajo
nityah sasvato 'yam purano
na hanyate hanyamane sarire (2.20)

"Jivatma (the individual soul) has no birth and no death. It is not born again and again and it has no growth. It is unborn, eternal-- always existing (past, present and future), old but always fresh. With the killing of the body, atma is not slain."

mayaivaite nihatah purvam
eva nimitta-matram bhava savya-
sacin (11.33)

"O Savyasacin ('Ambidexter'-- expert in shooting arrows with the left hand) I have already killed all; you become only instrumental to it. Shake off your false ego that you are the killer."

Then Arjuna thought, "I spoke about virtue, but Sri Krsna is dissatisfied. He has reproached me. Perhaps I am wrong in my ascertaining of truth and

falsehood:

karpanya-dosopahata-svabhavah
prcchami tvam dharma-
sammudha-cetah yac chreyah syan
niscitam bruhi tan me
sisyas te 'ham sadhi mam tvam
prapannam (2.7)

Arjuna said: "I have lost my natural valor. I am bewildered and cannot ascertain what is right and what is wrong. I submit to you. I am your disciple. Please advise me about my eternal welfare."

When Arjuna took shelter at the Lotus Feet of Sri Krsna, Sri Krsna as Guru started advising Arjuna, and through Arjuna all the conditioned souls of the world. Sri Krsna gave various instructions in the Gita befitting the competency or ability of individual souls. He advised about *karma* (the path of performing correct action), *jnana* (the path of knowledge), *yoga* (the path of austerity and meditation), and *bhakti* (the path of pure devotion). But if we go through the Gita thoroughly and carefully, we will find ultimately that Krsna takes all to *bhakti* (devotion).

Karma

Krsna, at first, speaks highly about *karma*, and inspires all to do *karma:*

na hi kascit ksanam
api jatu tisthaty
akarma-krt (3.5)

"Nobody can remain without *karma* (action) for a moment."

niyatam kuru karma
tvam karma jyayo hy
akarmanah sarira-
yatrapi ca te
na prasiddhyed akarmanah
(3.8)

"Always do *karma* (i.e., *nitya karma*, or eternal *karma*, as enjoined in the scriptures). Doing *karma* is better than not doing *karma,* as nobody can sustain

the body without *karma*. There are three kinds of *karma: karma*, *akarma* and *vikarma*. *Karma i*s that action which is enjoined by the Vedas; *akarma* is abstaining from doing duties enjoined by the Vedas; *vikarma* is the doing of action prohibited by the Vedas. Doers of *karma* in the world are very rare. Krsna recommended *karma*, but ultimately, He is taking us to *bhakti:*

yajnarthat karmano
'nyatra loko 'yam karma-
bandhanah tad-artham
karma kauteya mukta-
sangah samacara (3.9)

"**Do karma for *Yajna.*"**

yajna vai visnurti
srute

"In *sruti sastra,* Visnu is described as '*Yajna'*, and one of His names is Yajna."

ya idam visvam vyapnotiti visnuh

"Visnu is the All-pervading Supreme Lord, Complete Reality." If we do any action the Supreme Lord-- Complete Reality (*Purna*)--we will not be in bondage. If we do action for any part, we will be in bondage."

om tat sat

"The Supreme Lord is '*tat'* --transcendental-- that which cannot be comprehended by gross and subtle material senses."

We should perform *karma* for the Supreme Lord without any desire for the fruits of the *karma*. To do any action for the Supreme Lord is *bhakti* (devotion). By inspiring us to do *karma*, Krsna takes the *karmi* (doer) to *bhakti.*

Jnana

When Sri Krsna speaks about *jnana*, He extols it:

na hi jnanena
sadrsam pavitram
iha vidyate
tat svayam yoga-
samsiddhah
kalenatmani vindati
(4.38)

"There is nothing so sanctified as *jnana:*"

yathaidhamsi samiddho
'gnir bhasma-sat kurute
'rjuna jnanagnih sarva
karmani bhasma-sat
kurute tatha (4.37)

"As a blazing fire burns wood and reduces it to ashes, so too *jnana* destroys all kinds of

***karma* and reduces them to ashes." *Karma* is initiated by the false ego of the doer.**

prakrteh kriyamanani
gunaih karmani
sarvasah ahankara-
vimudhatma kartaham
iti manyate (3.27)

"The *jivas* (individual souls), being enveloped by the illusory energy of the Supreme Lord, which consists of three primal qualities (*sattvas*: goodness, *rajas*: passion and *tamas*: ignorance) misunderstands these qualities to be the body and wrongly think themselves as the doers."

When *sattva-guna* predominates, we become *sattvik;* if *rajo-guna* predominates, *rajasik;* and if *tamo-guna* predominates, *tamasik.* As per the color of the false ego, *karma* also is of three colors.

The *jnanis* (those who practice the path of knowledge) strive for self-realization. So all *karmas* emerging from material ego are destroyed by *jnana*. But by commending *jnana*, Krsna is ultimately taking us to *bhakti*.

bahunam janmanam
ante jnanavan mam
pradadyate
vasudevah sarvam iti
sa mahatma su-durlabhah
(7.19)

"After many births, proponents of *jnana marga* (the path of knowledge) take absolute shelter of Me (Vasudeva). Such a saint who sees everything in relation to Vasudeva is rarely to be found."

When knowledge is matured, *jnanis* can understand that without the grace of God, nobody can know Him. As there is no equal to Sri Krsna, and no one more than He is, nobody can get Him without His grace.

Yoga

Sri Krsna, Himself, has pronounced a comparative judgement in regard to this in the Gita:

tapasvibhyo 'dhiko
yogi jnanibhyo 'pi
mato 'dhikah
karmibhyas cadhiko
yogi tasmad yogi
bhavarjuna

yoginam api
sarvesam mad-
gatenantar-atmana
sraddhavan bhajate yo
mam sa me yuktatamo
matah (6.46-47)

"O Arjuna! Become a *yogi*, as a *yogi* is superior to a hermit who is practicing

severe austerities. The *yogi* (the worshipper of *Paramatma*) is superior to the *jnani* (the worshipper of formless *Brahman)*, and is naturally supremely superior to the *karmi* (one who does actions enjoined by the scriptures for mundane benefit). Amongst all kinds of *yogis*, one who, concentrating his mind on Me, worships Me (Eternal Transcendental Form) with firm faith and devotion is the highest *yogi*. Hence, the *bhakti-yogi* is the highest."

yasmat ksaram atito
'ham aksarad api
cottamah ato 'smi
loke vede ca
prathitah purusottamah
(15.18)

"As I am beyond *ksara* (the individual soul) and supremely superior to *aksara* (*Brahman* and *Paramatma*), I am renowned as *Purusottama* (the Supreme Personality) in this world. This is corroborated by the Vedas."

The Most Confidential Supreme Commandment

Arjuna was hearing Krsna's instructions, yet Krsna now says, "Hear Me" ("*Srnu me*"). Sri Krsna wanted to draw his special attention to His pronouncement:

sarva-guhyatamam
bhuyah srnu me
paramam vacah isto
'si me drdham iti
tato vaksyami te hitam
(18.64)

"O Arjuna, you might have been unmindful to my previous instructions. It will not be so detrimental to you. But you should very carefully and attentively hear Me now. As you are my most beloved, I am speaking this topmost secret of all secrets, My supreme commandment for your eternal welfare."

This is Sri Krsna's highest instruction that He gave to all conditioned souls of the world for their eternal welfare through Arjuna:

man-mana bhava mad-
bhakto mad-yaji mam
namaskuru mam
evaisyasi satyam te
pratijane priyo 'si me
(18.65)

"Devote your mind to Me. If it is difficult to devote your mind to Me, serve Me; engage your senses in My service. If this is also not possible, worship Me. If that even were not possible, take absolute shelter of Me. I promise you, surely, you will get Me."

In spite of that, Arjuna was oscillating, and could not decide what to do. Lastly, Krsna directed:

sarva-dharman
parityajya mam ekam
saranam vraja aham
tvam sarva-papebhyo
moksayisyami ma sucah
(18.66)

"Relinquish all My previous spiritual instructions about *dharma* (relative duties of *varna* and *asrama* as enjoined by the Vedas). Take absolute shelter of Me. I shall rescue you from all sins. Do not be overwhelmed with grief."

According to the Gita (7.4-5), the physical, gross body (composed of earth, water, fire, air and sky) and the subtle body (composed of mind, intelligence and perverted ego) are the

outcome of the *apara* potency (inferior material energy) of the Supreme Lord Sri Krsna. The real self, *atma* is the outcome of the *para* potency (superior spiritual energy) of the Supreme Lord. Body, mind and *atma*-- all belong to the Supreme Lord Sri Krsna. It is the duty of all individual spirit souls to serve Krsna.

Arjuna said:

arjuna uvaca
nasto mohah smrtir
labdha tvat-prasadan
mayacyuta sthito 'smi
gata-sandehah karisye
vacanam tava(18.73)

"O Acyuta, by Your Grace my bewilderment has been removed. It has come to my memory that I am Your servant, and all my doubts have been dispelled. I have come to learn that submission to You is the highest eternal function of every individual soul. I shall do whatever You will order to me to do."

And then the fight starts... Arjuna's fight is for **devotion. Notes:**

1. **Srila Bhaktivinode Thakura** (1838-1914) of Bengal, India wrote more than one hundred books in Bengali, Sanskrit, Parsi, Urdu and English on the topic of devotion to the Supreme Lord. He sent his own translation of *Srimad Bhagavad-gita* to American authors H.D. Thoreau and R.W. Emerson (hence the appellation "American Transcendentalists") who spoke of this great scripture in their journals. Bhaktivinode Thakur was dedicated to the spreading of the message of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu worldwide. His son and spiritual successor, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati instructed His disciples to preach throughout the world, which has resulted in the founding of many great institutions such as Gaudiya Math, Sri Caitanya Gaudiya Math, Sri Chaitanya Saraswat Math, ISKCON (International Society for Krishna Consciousness) GOKUL (Global Organization of Krishnachaitanya's Universal Love), etc. The speaker of this lecture, His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Ballabh Tirtha Goswami Maharaj, is the disciple of one of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati's intimate associates, namely, Srila Bhakti Dayita Madhava Gosvami Maharaja, Founder-Acarya of Sri Caitanya Gaudiya Math.

2. **Pariksit Maharaja** was Arjuna's grandson and the last of the Pandava dynasty. He was cursed by the young son of a brahmana to die in seven days. He spent these last days listening to the recitation of the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* by Sukadeva Goswami and thus attained pure love for Sri Krsna.

3. This is the fourth verse of the glorification of the Gita known as the

gita-mahatmya, which appears in the *Padma Purana*. These verses do not appear in most English Gita translations, but can be found in the introduction to the "Bhagavad-gita As It Is" by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, publisher).

4. **Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu** appeared in West Bengal in 1486 and is understood by the *Vaisnavas* to be an appearance of the Supreme Lord Krsna Himself in the guise of a devotee. He propagated and prescribed the method of worship for this era, which is to chant the Names, Pastimes, etc., of the Supreme Lord with great devotion. This particular story of :Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu is related in the *Caitanya Caritamrta* by Krsna dasa Kaviraja Gosvami (*Madhya-Lila*, 9. 93-107).

5. The term ***Maharaja*** (literally: "great king") can refer not only to a member of the renounced order, as in the case of Bhakti Kumud Santa Gosvami Maharaja mentioned here

(as well as the speaker, Srila Bhakti Ballabh Tirtha Maharaja), but it can also refer to a king of a state, as in the case of the King of Kashmir, Maharaja Hari Simha, also mentioned in this anecdote.

6. But in the Sanskrit language, the word "*ca*" means "**and**" (not "tea" as it does in Hindi).

7. **Visvanatha Cakravarti** is the fifth principal Acarya in the preceptorial channel from Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

8. **Sattva-guna** ("the mode of goodness"): if the mode of goodness is predominant, we become good, passion produces a passionate disposition, etc.

9. ***Paramatma*** means "the Supreme *Atma*", or "Supreme Spirit Soul" Who is one aspect of Sri Krsna Himself. The true *yogi* (i.e., one who practices *yoga*) meditates on the *Paramatma* as He personally dwells within the heart of every living entity.

10. ***Varna*:** one of the most frequently misunderstood concepts in the West, usually translated as "caste." There are four *varnas: brahmana* (the priestly class), *ksatriya* (the administrative and warrior class), *vaisya* (the mercantile class), and *sudra* (the working class, and the craftsmen). There are also four

asramas, or stages of life: *brahmacarya* (the student stage, wherein one learns all the principles of religious life), *grhasta* (the householder stage, wherein one raises a family according to the principles which he has learned in the *brahmacarya* stage), *vanaprasta* (the retired stage, wherein a married couple or individual leaves material life to pursue religious activities) and *sannyasa* (completely renounced period of life). This last stage of *sannyasa* is not practiced by all individuals, and is difficult to attain for the average person. The speaker of this lecture, His Divine Grace Bhakti Ballabh Tirtha Gosvami Maharaja is in the *sannyasi asram*, as indicated by His titles "*Gosvami*" and "*Maharaja*" A detailed discussion on the Vedic *varnasrama* system is well beyond the scope of this brief note, but suffice it to say that it was understood in Vedic times, and by all those who follow its tenets to this day, that all human beings have a propensity towards one of the four *varnas*, and that everyone's life may be divided into the four *asramas*. It is the duty of all individuals to act according to their position in life, based upon firmly rooted religious principles, as opposed to materialistic motivation. This allows society to progress smoothly and cooperatively without conflict as the ultimate goal for all individuals is the same: the service of the Supreme Lord. Unlike its modern distortion, the Vedic *varnasrama* system is not based upon heredity or wealth but upon the natural inclinations of the individual person. Arjuna is a *ksatriya grhasta*.

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A question was asked by Akincan Prabhu: Vyasadev wrote the supreme pastimes of Krishna in the 10th Canto of Srimad Bhagavatam. What is the necessity of the 11th and 12th Canto?

Answer by Sreela Bhakti Ballabh Tirtha Goswami Maharaj:

Vedavyas Muni has not unnecessarily written the 11th and 12th Canto. He has narrated the highest pastimes of Krishna with the Gopis, parakiya, in the 10th Canto. It is very difficult to understand this. We have the habit to imitate, especially elevated persons, people of respect. Krishna is the Supreme Lord. If he has 16,108 wives, then we can also have two or three. Krishna may be powerful. But Krishna will be the only enjoyer? This is not good. It is injust. He may have 95%. We should have 5%.

Previously Vedavyas Muni gave warning about this. Directly, you cannot go to the 10th Canto. You should first study the 1st Canto through the 9th. You should hear from a bona- fide sadhu. After hearing; when you will be competent and have knowledge of who is Krishna, who are the Gopis, what is their relation; then you are entitled to hear the pastimes in the 10th Canto. Not before that. When Sukadev Goswami narrated the Bhagavatam to Pariksit Maharaj, he did not start with the 10th Canto. He started with the first. Then second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, Drhuva Charitra, Prahlad Charitra, eighth, ninth, Ambarish Maharaj...After that, after hearing all of this, then Sukadev narrated the 10th.

We might hear these pastimes. But we may be unmindful; if we do not meditate on the subject, we may make a wrong interpretation of it. So Vedavyas Muni has warned us before the 10th Canto and is again warning us in the 11th. He has doubt. Have we really heard the first nine Cantos? And if we did hear, when we listen to the 10th, are we meditating on those past teachings?

In the 11th Canto, Vidhey Raj Nimi asked this question: We are enslaved jivas; we are slaves of the sense organs. We are running after enjoyment; we are enveloped by the illusory energy. We have a misconception of self. How can we surmount the cycles of births and deaths; the three-fold afflictions? What is the easiest way?

Prabhudh Muni answered: In this world, everyone is doing something. For what purpose? For removing sufferings and getting happiness. When someone is unable to get that by their single effort, they marry. And together they work towards happiness, but just the opposite happens. But still, they together want to remove sufferings and get happiness. If they have a son this will help. So they do that and the trouble increases. Then a daughter, three, four, five children and jointly they try to get happiness. And with the growing family, the troubles also grow.

Through love we can get Krishna; pure love. Krishna has all the love

relations; master- servant, friendship, parental, husband-wife; and ultimately, after being married, having love relations with others outside of marriage. Although this is the highest love narrated in the 10th Canto, it is the most abominable in this world. The highest there is the lowest here.

All these relations that Krishna has are also seen here. But we cannot think it is the same. He is the master. We are not. He enjoys with friends, parents, wives, consorts. As much as we try to enjoy like Him, as much suffering we will get. So after narrating Krishna's highest pastimes in the 10th Canto, Vedavyas Muni is again warning us. Our love relation is with Krishna. All are trying to remove their sufferings and increase happiness. If we try by enjoying all the love relations in this world, misery will not be removed, it will only increase.